

N. Ramanathan.

NATIONAL CENTRE  
FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS

राष्ट्रीय संगीत नाट्य केन्द्र

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M. Tammamathan

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## CONTENTS

A Century of Sound Recording—Denis Comper	.. ..	1
The Phonograph in India—G. N. Joshi	.. ..	5
The Impact of Recordings—Leonard Marcus	.. ..	28
The Role of Recordings—Jacob Siskind	.. ..	31
The Audible Past—David Lowenthal	.. ..	35
News and Notes	.. ..	45
Book Reviews	.. ..	48
Record Reviews	.. ..	55

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## A Century of Sound Recording

Denis Comper



*A special ceremony at UNESCO House on 18 April followed by a week-long exhibition marked the centenary of the invention of sound recording. Organized by the International Federation of Producers of Phonograms and Videograms (IFPI) and the International Music Council, both UNESCO affiliates, the ceremony had for its main speaker Mr. Edgar Faure, President of the French National Assembly, who drew attention to the coincidence between the discoveries by Charles Cros, the French poet, and Thomas Edison, the American engineer.*

*"This (coincidence) is not surprising," Mr. Faure said. "No invention is achieved by an individual in isolation, but rather by mankind in its entirety".*

*Thanks to the invention of sound recording, "a new relation with the past has been established, a new dimension of culture has been realized," said Mr. John E. Fobes, Deputy Director-General of UNESCO. He mentioned UNESCO's role, working with the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) and the International Labour Office (ILO), in drawing up the Rome Convention, adopted in 1961, for the protection of the rights of performers, producers of phonograms and broadcasting organizations, and the 1971 Geneva convention, drawn up by UNESCO and WIPO, against unauthorized duplication of phonograms.*

*Also taking part were Mrs. K. L. Liguier-Laubhouet, WIPO Deputy Director-General, Mr. S. K. Jain, ILO Deputy Director-General, and Mr. Francois Minchin, IFPI Chairman.*

*In the following article, Denis Comper of IFPI briefly surveys the history of sound recording.*

Ever since mankind became aware of the beautiful sounds of the environment and was inspired to invent music, attempts have been made to discover means of capturing those sounds. Explorers' tales are full of references to marvels like the South Sea sponges into which one could

whisper, squeezing the sponge to hear the voice again, but presumably, only once. Or the mysterious boxes of the Chinese mandarins designed to contain spoken messages which could be heard when the lid was opened. Cyrano de Bergerac waxed as eloquent over a miraculous book which would speak to a student listener. According to him the use of such books explained the high standard of education enjoyed by the inhabitants of the Moon.

But for all the many stories, myths and legends, the very number of which demonstrates the intense desire of mankind to be able to store sounds, nobody succeeded until one hundred years ago. Admittedly at various times from the Middle Ages onwards, craftsmen of great skill have constructed machines which can produce music, and even sounds imitating speech, but the musical performance is always peculiar to the machine itself, owing nothing to a human musician.

In 1857, a Frenchman of Scottish descent, Leon Scott, built a machine which could translate sound waves into patterns of wavy lines drawn on the surface of a rotating cylinder. He called it the *Phonautograph*. It could not replay what it had heard, but it is reliably reported that Queen Victoria was amused; so Scott can truly be said to have scored a minor triumph and, indeed he had, in a very practical sense. For exactly twenty years later, in 1877, another Frenchman, Charles Cros, was inspired by Scott's work.

Cros was one of those clever people who have the undoubted ability to invent things but seem to lack the essential energy and drive to make their ideas accepted. He was a poet who had already invented a method of three-colour photography and, in consequence, he knew something about photo-engraving.

On April 18, 1877, he completed a paper in which he proposed a method of recording sound and a process by which that sound could be replayed. He submitted his paper to the *Académie des Sciences* in Paris on April 30. On December 5, his paper was accepted by the learned academicians.

Cros, however, did not persevere with his invention. No machine was ever built to his design. His process has never been put to the test. It is said he could not afford the fee necessary to obtain a patent to protect his interests. Whatever the real reason, the conclusion must be drawn that neither Cros nor anyone else saw the immense significance of what he had invented. Polite interest was expressed and a little ecclesiastical enthusiasm on the part of l'Abbé Lenoir who wrote a piece about it in the October issue of *La Semaine du Clergé*, but nothing more.

#### *Birth of the Speaking Machine*

During this same year of 1877 an American, Thomas Alva Edison, had also discovered, almost by accident as it were, a means of replaying sound. He was developing a means of sending high speed telegraph messages recorded on paper tape, the forerunner of the punched tape sys-

tem used today for high-speed telex transmissions. Edison noticed that running the tape at a rate faster than the intended speed produced a sound of its own.

It takes a genius immediately to recognize the potential in such an accidental phenomenon. Edison was certainly a genius. In August of 1862 he was a 15-year-old itinerant candy-seller waiting on the railway station of Mount Clemens, Macomb County, Michigan, when the station master's baby son strayed into the path of a shunting boxcar. Edison snatched the child to safety. His reward was to become permanent house guest of the station master, Jock Mackenzie, and to be given a crash course in railway telegraphy thus achieving a childhood ambition.

In a very short time Al Edison became the ace telegraphist of the Grand Trunk line on the Detroit to Port Huron section. His talent as an inventor quickly showed itself. In 1870, he was granted one of his many patents for an improvement to the "ticker tape" system so vital to the efficient working of the booming American stock market. The Gold and Stock Telegraph Company paid him the immense sum of \$40,000 and Edison was rich enough to buy and equip his first laboratory at Newark, New Jersey.

His success continued until, in 1876, he moved to new premises a short distance away in Menlo Park where the *Phonograph* was born. Of all his many inventions Edison is best known throughout the world for this one, the invention of the speaking machine.

There are many names of people who made invaluable contributions to the establishment and development of recorded sound. Edison's exact contemporary, Alexander Graham Bell, for example, the inventor of the telephone, his cousin, Chichester Bell, and his collaborator, Charles Tainter. There are many, many others.

#### *A Creation in its Own Right*

So the mechanical means of recording and replaying at will the world's sound heritage was invented. But it took many years for mankind to appreciate the true value of the invention. At first it was regarded merely as an amusing novelty. Against determined opposition from the stenographers of the day, efforts were made to exploit the potential as a dictating machine. Almost 80 years were to pass before sound recording became a creative art in its own right, 80 years marked by ruinous law-suits alleging patent infringements, the great slump of the 1920s, the rivalry of radio, two World Wars, the counter-attraction of the cinema. It was the people's demand for music, brought to them through sound recordings, that saved the record business.

In the last twenty years the record business has undergone a revolution. Today a sound recording is a work of creation in its own right, involving performers, the producer, engineers. Like a butterfly in amber the talent of the great artiste can be preserved for all times.

But all is not as happy as might be with the record business. It all stems from the fact that, in the beginning, nobody took this invention very seriously, not even the inventors. Edison quickly got bored with it, finding the invention of the electric light more rewarding. He returned to it very quickly when he thought his supremacy in the field was threatened by Bell. But they were only making copies, not original and unique performances on record as we do now. Not so surprising, therefore, that we had to wait until the General Conference of UNESCO held last November, in Nairobi, that is 99 years after the invention, for a protocol to be adopted which at last recognizes sound recordings as cultural material qualifying for all the privileges and protection so long enjoyed by the book. The book, whatever its contents, is cultural material, but not sound recordings, until just now. The record business has been accepted, and it is a well earned privilege.

(Courtesy: UNESCO FEATURES)

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## The Phonograph in India

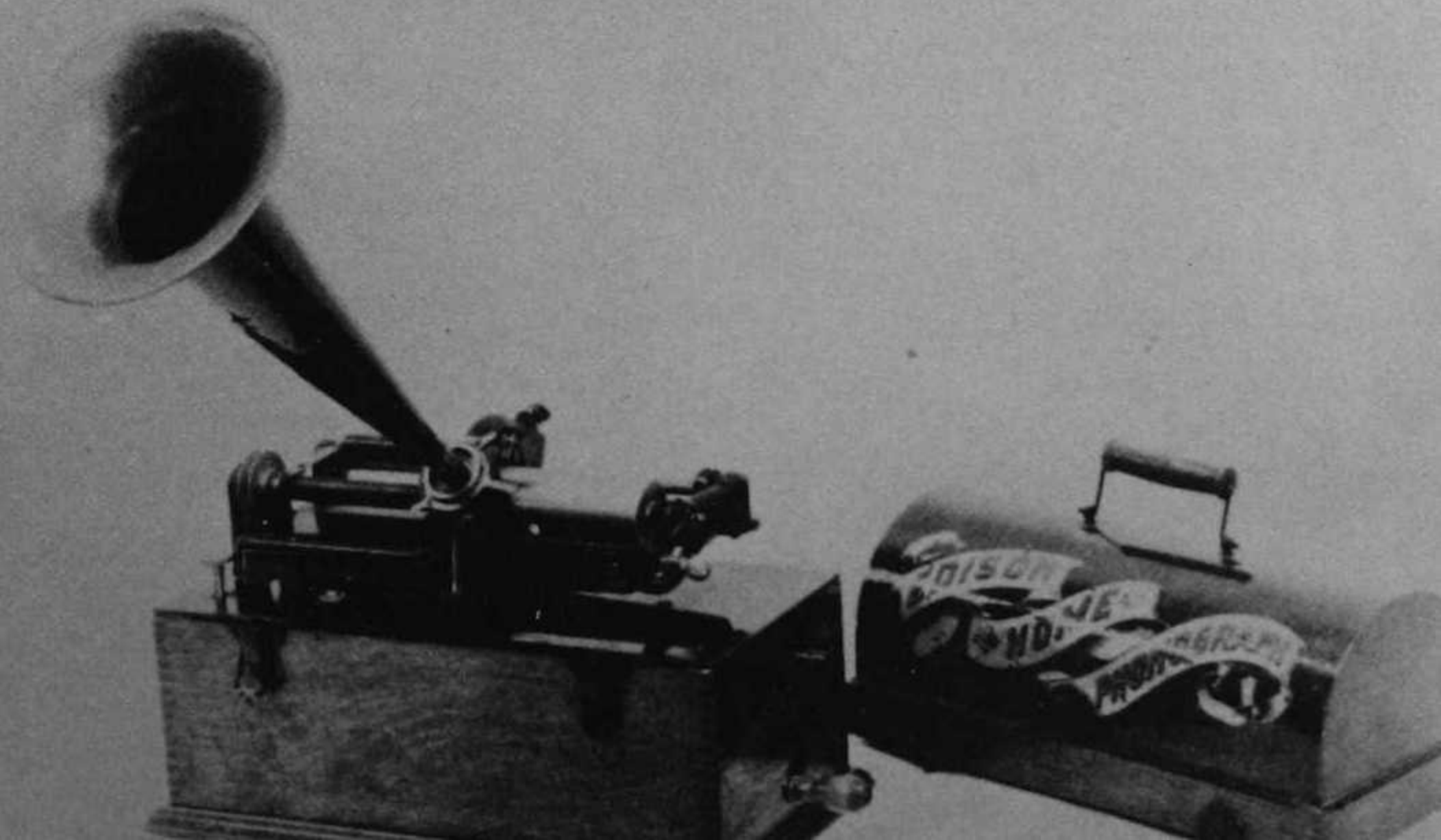
G. N. Joshi

### *The Beginnings*

The history of the phonograph in India dates back to the beginning of the century. Though gramophones began to be exported to India since 1898, the idea of commercially exploiting the phonograph on a large scale in the east was mooted in 1900 and Messrs. The Mutoscope Biograph Co. of India was given the agency of selling horn-gramophones and records of European music imported from America. In 1898, Mr. W. B. Owen had established in England the parent company of the Gramophone Co. Ltd. He was sent to England by the American inventor of disc recording, Mr. Emile Berliner, to sell, if possible, his European rights for the disc records which he had patented in the U.S.A. Since Mr. Owen did not succeed in selling Mr. Berliner's rights outright, the two formed The Gramophone Co. Ltd. in England. Mr. Berliner erected a record pressing factory at Hanover in the U.S.A. for supplying records and machines to the newly-formed company in England.

At this point a mechanic named Johnson invented a spring-wound motor for the phonograph machine. Until the time his invention was perfected, users (during the period when the record was being played) had to rotate, with the help of a handle, the turntable with the disc on it. The spring-motor

*Edison 'Home' Model A*



enabled the phonograph to be wound for a certain number of playings and hence the listener could sit at a distance without having to bother to crank the machine all the time.

The Mutoscope Biograph Co. in India started selling machines and records pressed in America. The most popular record imported into India at that time was the Bert Sheppard record "The Laughing Song". It had proved popular wherever it has been released. Over a period of a few years nearly half a million copies of this record were sold.

The Mutoscope Biograph Co. did not do well; and its agency was terminated. In 1901, Mr. J. Watson Harod was sent out to open a branch of the company, which he did on July 7, 1901, in Calcutta.

In the initial stages, a gramophone record used to be manufactured by the process known as 'zinc etching'. A zinc disc with a smooth, shiny surface was coated with a layer of fat, on which a spiral groove was cut by a stylus. The stylus was fixed to a diaphragm that vibrated in sympathy with the sound waves of the song and music, sung or played into the large mouth of a horn. The recorded zinc disc was then immersed in acid for about ten minutes and the spiral groove of the music was etched into it. This record could then be played back straightaway.

In 1901, recording on wax was invented and it also became possible to duplicate the matrices, so that huge quantities could be pressed from these. The process opened up an enormous field for expansion.

Pathé



Polyphon No. 1492



By the beginning of October 1902, Mr. T. W. Gaisberg, who had worked with Mr. Berliner for several years, came out to India with the intention of developing the record trade in the east. His recordings in India became a landmark of great value.

Gaisberg and his successors in the following years recorded Miss Dulari, Gourajan, Zohran, Malkajan, Angurbala, Indubala, Kamala, Goharjan and popular *quwali*-singers Pearu Quwal, Kaloo Quwal, Fakre Alam Quwal

Angurbala



Kamala Jharia

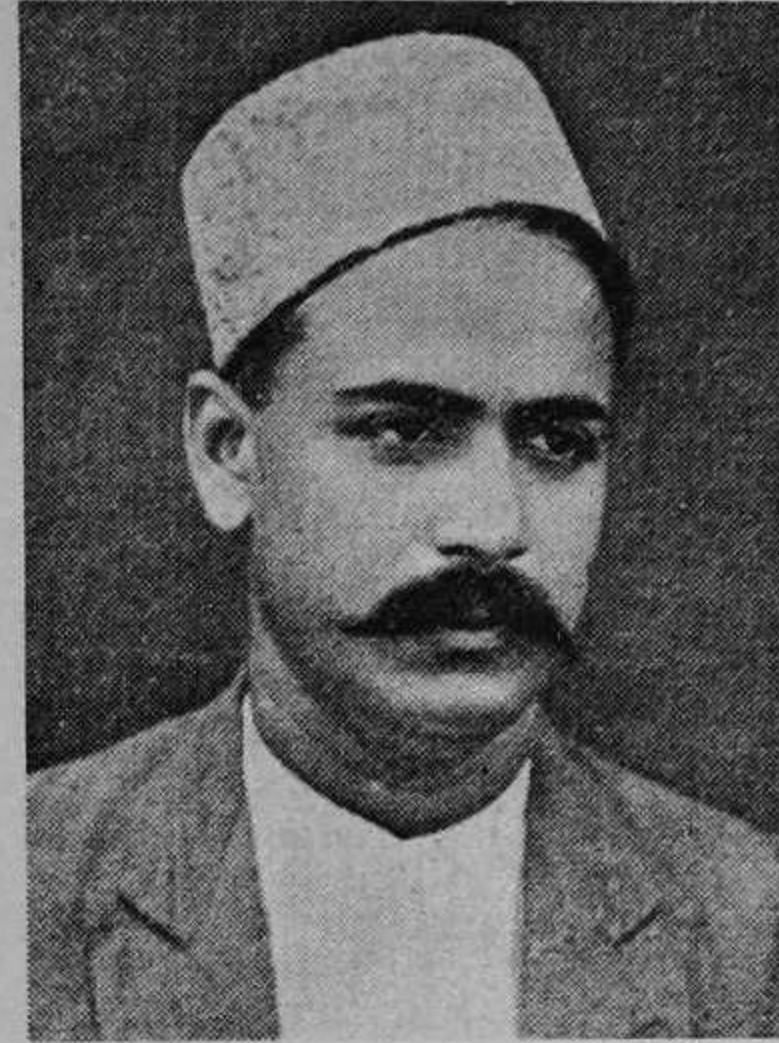


and several others. The accompaniment for these artistes comprised just a few instruments: a harmonium, tabla, sarod, clarionet, and with female singers, the sarangi and bells. These recordings were sent to the factory at Hanover for processing and pressing. The finished records were then imported back into India and were sold in large numbers. In order to interest prospective purchasers to listen to discs, a novel idea was tried out. At the close of the singing, the artist would announce his or her name "My name is Jankibai of Allahabad" or "My name is Mushtaribai of Agra". These statements in English by performers who did not know the language amused listeners and helped somewhat to boost sales of discs. The earliest record was only 7" in size but later it was increased to 10" and 12". The early horn machines were black in colour, but later these were changed to brass for a more attractive and dazzling effect. The coloured horn was known as "Morning Glory" and it became a rage in 1907.

The year 1908 was unique in the history of the gramophone for in that year factories were established, one at Belliaghat in Calcutta and the other at Hayes, Middlesex, in England. This assured a steady supply of gramophone motors, machines and records to the rapidly growing market in India.

After the initial success of the record "The Laughing Song" by Bert Sheppard, the company brought out another one by Charles Primrose.

#### Goharjan



*Kaloo Quwal*



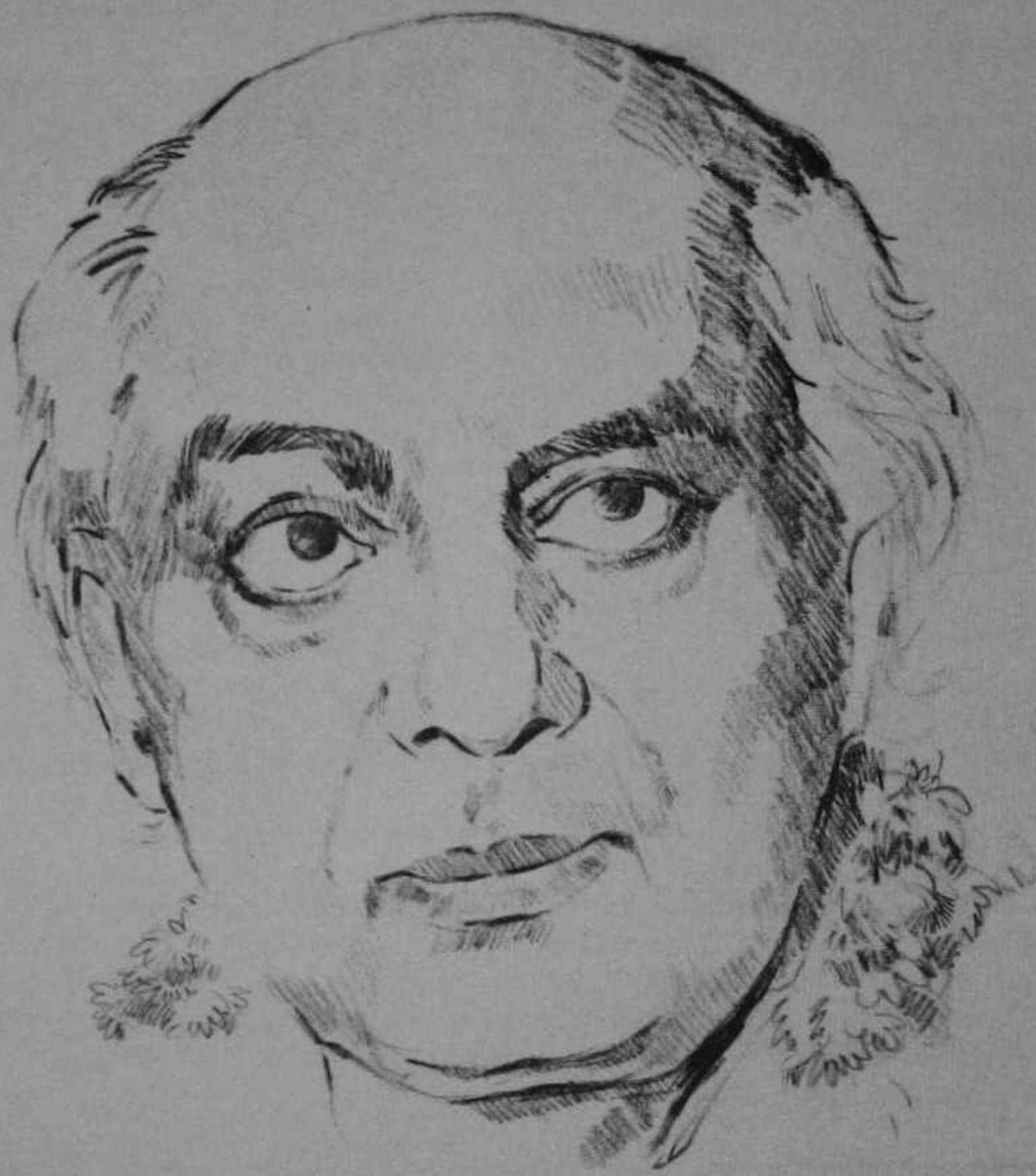
*Fakre Alam Quwal*

Records containing route-march songs, bugle-calls, camp-fire songs, 'pipes and drums' played by Q. O. Cameron Highlanders of the 2nd Battalion and comic songs like "The Peanut Vendor" also proved to be money-spinners. The company's factory at Belliaghat could not meet the rapidly growing demand for discs. In 1928, therefore, the company shifted its operations to a bigger factory at Dum Dum.

#### *Technological Developments*

The period of the last nearly fifty years has been one of continuous progress and expansion. The introduction of electrical recording in 1925, when microphones, amplifiers and cutting styli were used for recording the 'master' on wax, brought about a miraculous change in the technique of recording. The voice of the singers and the accompanying instruments could be controlled and what is called a 'balance' between the two could be achieved. The round piece of wax shaved to a mirror-finish was placed on a turntable which was driven at a fixed speed of 78 R.P.M. through a governor-driven device. A heavy weight attached to a pulley, descending slowly through a cable wound around a drum, would drive the turntable at a steady speed.

There were no studios with good acoustics and engineers had to arrange heavy curtains on the walls and thick carpets on the floors to ensure that the sound on the disc was neither too dull nor too reverberant. Later on, studios were set up in Dum Dum (Calcutta), Bombay, Madras and Delhi. Wax recording held sway till about 1948, despite the risk of breakage in transit from the recording centres to the factory at Dum Dum. To minimize such hazards, acetate-coated aluminium discs began to be used. But the weight-drive could not provide the requisite power to cut the new material



Kazi Nazrul Islam

which was stiffer than wax; an electric motor had to be used for this purpose. Then, in 1950, came the revolutionary magnetic tape-recorder with a frequency response of 50 to 10,000 cycles per second. This recorder also provided facilities for playing back the recorded material. The merits and flaws of the recorded piece could be observed, and mistakes rectified through re-recording (after an erasure of the previously recorded attempts). This resulted in improved sound-quality in the performances, without any loss except of labour and time. By 1964, even better tape-recorders, with a frequency response between 40 to 15,000 cycles per second, appeared and alongside facilities for stereophonic recording.

Besides manufacturing and marketing machines and records, the company today offers a wide variety of record-players, radiograms, tuners, and stereo-systems through a nationwide network. The phonograph that first landed in India at the beginning of this century has found its way into millions of homes and the invention of the great Thomas Edison and Charles Cros is rightly known today as one that radiates human happiness.

## Expansion of Activities

India, with a population of over six hundred and twenty million people and more than thirty languages and dialects, has a varied treasure of musical traditions and colourful folklore. The present catalogue of the company includes over 7,500 records featuring every kind of fare: classical, folk, patriotic, devotional, light classical, light as well as pop and film music. In addition to items of sheer entertainment value, there are quite a large number of recordings of educational and cultural interest.

The stirring words of our national leaders, Mahatma Gandhi and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, were recorded and thus preserved for future generations. *Vande Mataram* was recorded by Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore somewhere around 1900. The record was a 12" disc which played from inside to outside and it was published under the auspices of H. Bose's Record. A copy of the record was traced in 1961, the centenary of Gurudev's birth. Gurudev Tagore's voice was also recorded by H.M.V. during the early '20s in the Belliaghata factory and subsequently in the studios at Dum Dum. The voices of Kazi Nazrul Islam, Sumitranandan Pant, Mahadevi Verma, D. R. Bendre and poet Vallathol have also been preserved through records of their recitations of their poems.

During the early years, the company marketed imported records under various different labels such as Pathe, R.C.C., Decca, Pye, but soon afterwards it obtained the exclusive rights to use in India the trade-mark "His Master's Voice". Undoubtedly the dog and the phonograph is today the most famous trade-mark in the world and although millions of listeners are fascinated by the picture of "The Nipper and the Machine", very few people know the real story behind the picture.

An artist named Francis Barraud observed that a dog belonging to his deceased brother Mark Barraud would cock one ear to the sound emitted by an old Edison phonograph. It used to listen with rapt attention and the expression on its face suggested that it seemed to be waiting to hear its late master's voice. Francis Barraud was quick to grasp the value of the scene and he painted it as he saw it — "The Nipper and the Edison-Machine". He took the picture to the Edison Company but they did not evince any interest in it. A friend suggested to him that he change the ugly black machine and substitute it with a more modern horn. In 1899, while he was tramping the streets of London in the hope of finding such a horn from one of the various companies engaged in the rapidly growing record business, he happened





to call at the small office of the Gramophone Co. Ltd. He showed his oil-painting to the manager, B. Owen, who immediately grasped the potential it held as a trade-mark for his company. He gave a hundred pounds to the artist and obtained it for the company. The company had till then another trade-mark, "An angel writing, while sitting, on a disc". But when records with the dog and the sound-horn appeared, with the caption, "His Master's Voice", the trade-mark won fame and popularity of a kind unparalleled in the history of the industry. It was found printed on millions of records and machines in several countries of the world. In India, it first appeared on a portable machine in 1920. Later it was printed on the first electric records produced by the company. The abbreviated letters "H.M.V." for His Master's Voice became synonymous with the organisation "The Gramophone Co. Ltd."

The Gramophone Co. and the records with the dog trade-mark were meeting with increasing popularity and market support. The period (1920-21) coincided with the political awakening in the country and the nation-wide movement of Swadeshi. As a result businessmen, inspired by patriotic sentiments, decided to market records of songs supporting the Swadeshi Movement. The songs invoked listeners to boycott foreign goods and purchase exclusively things made in the country. T. S. Ramchander & Co., a firm in Bombay, recorded a number of such songs by local artistes and had them processed in Germany. These were issued under the 'Ramagraph' label.

*Bal Gandharva*

*Hirabai Barodekar*



*Bai Sunderabai*

About the same time (1920-25) musical dramas began to stage a comeback on the Marathi stage. Actor-singers like Bal Gandharva, Keshavrao Bhosle, Master Krishnarao, Master Dinanath, Bapoo Pendharkar, Vinayakrao Patwardhan, Sawai Gandharva, Chhota Gandharva, Hirabai Barodekar, performed practically every evening on the stage in the larger cities. The actor-singers were all gifted with enchanting voices; they had also had training under exacting masters in classical music. Each one of these actor-singers succeeded in developing a distinctive individual style of presentation. Vocalists like Bhaskarbuwa Bakhale, Ramkrishnabuwa Vaze, Abdul Karim Khan had been groomed by great Muslim Ustads and they, in turn, passed on the great tradition to these young and gifted actor-singers. These dramas drew packed houses since the audiences were charmed by the music they presented.

The Gramophone Co. seized the opportunity to record the more popular songs and thus began an era of stage-music on gramophone discs. Scores of songs recorded by these actor-singers were the rage of the day and even today, after nearly three decades, listeners are overwhelmed by nostalgia when they listen to these songs of yesteryear. The Bengali and the Gujarati stage could also boast of a rich musical talent, and songs from plays thus gave a strong impetus to the record business.

The phonograph gained rapidly in popularity. The Gramophone Co. was faced with the challenge of satisfying the musical needs of a diversity of people, speaking different languages and spread over a vast sub-continent. But to record the musical lore that was part of their tradition was well-nigh impossible. The recording capacity of the Dum Dum factory and facilities for absorbing the discs in the market were limited. The Gramophone Co. could not by itself accept all the talent and material available.

Two companies, 'Columbia' and 'Odeon', with established labels in the world market, were trying to gain access to the Indian market. Columbia

started its operations in India in 1930 through S. Rose and Co. in Bombay and P. Orr and Sons in Madras and Odeon was introduced by Carl Lindstrom, a German. These companies started recordings in their own studios and had the discs processed and pressed in the U.K. and Germany respectively. Popular artistes like Goharbai, Amirbai Karnataki, Omkarnath Thakur and Saraswati Fatarphekar appeared on the Columbia label while Odeon presented such names as Bai Sunderabai, Hirabai Barodekar, Abdul Karim Khan, Sureshbabu Mane, Azambai and Shankarrao Sarnaik. Omkarnath Thakur, Abdul Karim Khan and Hirabai Barodekar were exponents of classical music. Sunderabai and Azambai presented the *lavani*—a typical regional music-form with a strong romantic content. Columbia later took over Odeon but by 1938-39 itself got amalgamated with The Ruby Record Co. The Ruby Record Co., which was started in Bombay in 1933, introduced listeners to the music of Bal Gandharva, Master Krishnarao, Ramkrishnabuwa Vaze and other vocalists. The Gramophone Co., however, took over The Ruby Record Co. in 1943 and thus also obtained the repertoires of Columbia and Odeon. The vast repertoire of the three companies was subsequently divided between H.M.V. and Columbia, when the latter was revived again as a separate entity in 1945. It had a separate office alongside H.M.V. but the recordings done in the H.M.V. studios were common and intended to feed both the companies.

Yet another attempt at forming an independent recording company was made as early as 1934 under the name 'Broadcast Record Co'. Backed and financed by a city firm of jewellers, it won over for its label top-ranking artistes like Kesarbai Kerkar, Master Krishnarao, Siddheshwaridevi, Mallikarjun Mansur, Rasoolanbai, Jaddanbai (mother of Nargis Dutt) by paying them fabulous fees. But the company soon foundered on the rocks of economic losses.

The Gramophone Co. Ltd. thus succeeded in allowing a few small companies to function under its own wing. In Calcutta alone there appeared three such units. The Hindustan Record Co. (1931), the Megaphone Record Co. (1932) and the Senola Record Co. (1932). Senola concentrated on talent in the Bengali language. The Hindustan label became immensely popular with the records of songs by K. L. Saigal. Megaphone was associated with the bewitching voice of Akhtari Faizabadi. These companies did their recording and pressing with H.M.V. but distributed the records through their own channels. Their success led to the creation of other units and soon other labels like Bharat, Pioneer, Victoriaphone, Manmohan, Shahenshahi, Filmophone flooded the market.

The Gramophone Co. Ltd. had its head office and factory at Dum Dum. But it had by now opened branch offices and depots in Bombay, Delhi, Madras, Kanpur and Gauhati. Many smaller companies were soon ushered in by these branches. In Madras, there was Hutchinsons; in Bombay, Jaya-bharat and King Record Co.; in U.P., Maxitone, Aerophone, Star Record Co.; in Punjab, Jemophone, Gulshan, Frontier Trading Co.; and in Rajasthan (at Jodhpur), the Marwadi Record Co. All these small companies were reared and fostered by the Gramophone Co. Ltd.

# HARIPURA CONGRESS 1938 SESSION



Honour for Sm. Sati Devi and Kanak Das

These artistes were invited to sing **VANDE MATARAM** at the Congress Session at Haripura. These are the artistes who made the Vande Mataram record in Bengali (N17014).

The Hindi version appears on N6944 which has already become popular.

Keep the record before the public as the demand will increase as time goes on.

Sm. Sati Devi is often referred to as a nightingale in her part of the country and here are some of the records she has made for your benefit:—

## HINDI

- |        |   |                                                                                                                   |
|--------|---|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| P10642 | { | MEERA TO GIRDIHAR GOPAL—<br>MIRABAI BHAIJAN<br>MAINE CHAKAR RAKHOJI—<br>MIRABAI BHAIJAN                           |
| P11817 | { | KHELAT HAI GIRDIHARI<br>—HORI<br>THUMAK CHALAT RAM-<br>CHANDRA                                                    |
| P11807 | { | BARSE BADRIYA SAVANKI<br>PYARE DARSAN DIJO                                                                        |
| N9998  | { | MANRE PARAS HARIKA<br>CHITARAN—BHAJAN—Sati Devi<br>and Mr. Dutt<br>AO ZULA ZULANE ZULA—<br>Sati Devi and Mr. Dutt |

## BENGALI

P11763, P11796, P11802, N3820, N17005



Parasuram

## A NEW PRABHAT RECORD!

At least the two songs which appear on this record have not been available on one record before.

Those of you who saw the film "Duniya Na Mane" will remember how very good the song of the little boy was. Hindus, Mahommedans, Parsees—all liked it. This song was put on record No. N15619 on the other side of which appears the very popular Hindu Arti. For Hindus this record was ideal as it had the Arti and the very popular song of the boy. But for non-Hindus, the Arti had no attraction and many of them did not buy the record for this reason.

To meet the demand of non-Hindu buyers, we re-arranged the song of the street-boy-singer:—

MAN SAF TERA HAI YA NAHIN

The record is:—

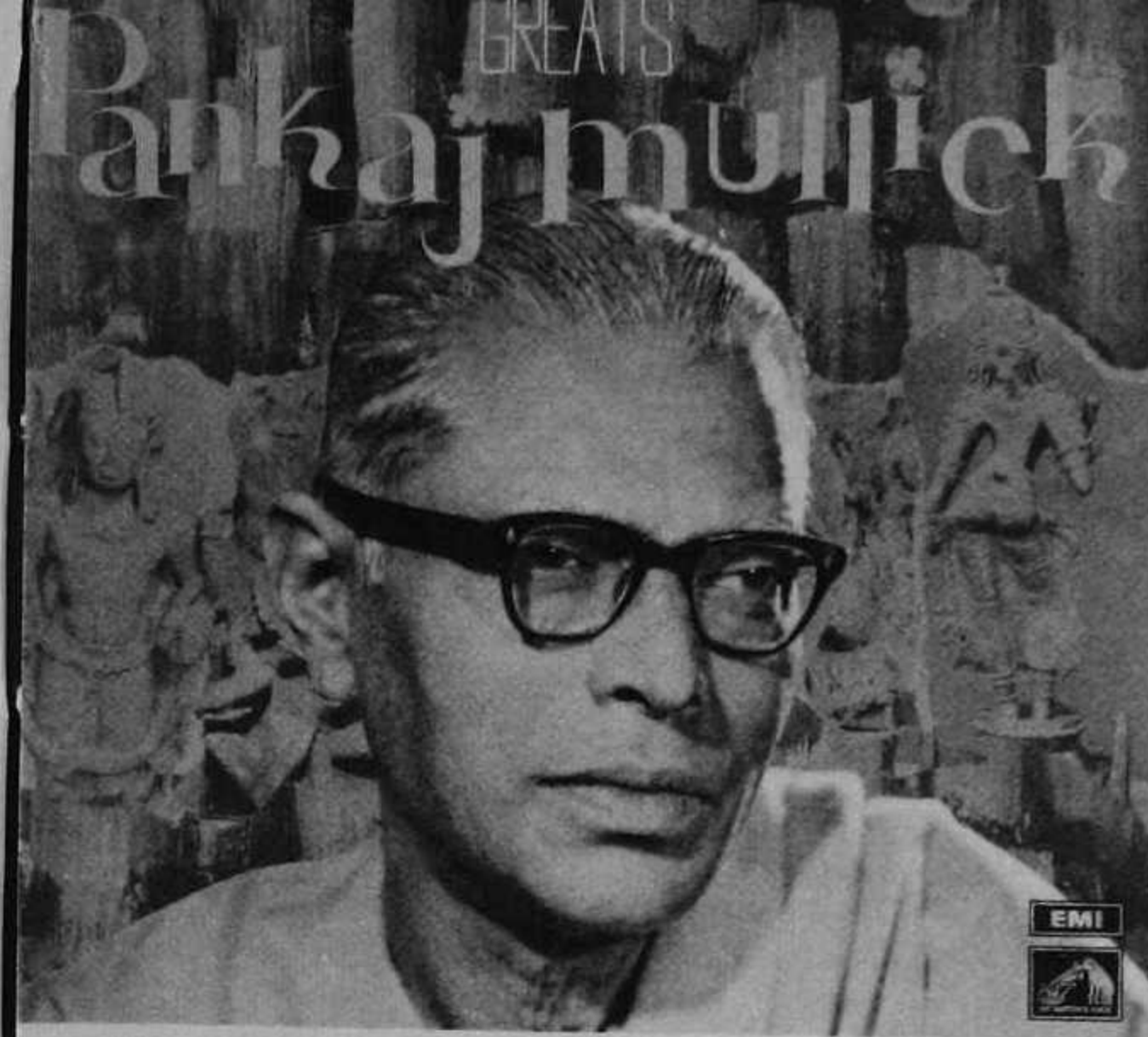
- |        |   |                           |
|--------|---|---------------------------|
| N15654 | { | MAN SAF TERA HAI YA NAHIN |
|        |   | SAMJHA KYA HAI DUNIYA     |
- By Parasuram  
—By Shanta Apte

All the records from this film as they have been available so far will remain unchanged. N15654 is an additional record for those who like the two songs put on it.

In the span of over seventy years of its existence, there have been hardly five or six serious attempts at breaking the monopoly enjoyed by the Gramophone Co. Ltd. As early as 1920, a Gujarati businessman named Vallabhdas floated (with German collaboration) a company called 'Vialophone'. This Bombay-based venture proved to be very short-lived. Later, taking advantage of the nationalist movement, another businessman promoted a company called 'The National Gramophone Record Co.'. 'Young India' and the emblem of the National Flag, accepted by the Indian National Congress, was its trade-mark. The entire manufacturing plant, machinery and the technical personnel were imported from Japan. This was about the year 1938, when film-music had just begun to exercise influence on the record trade. The earliest records of film-music were brought here in 1934 from Germany by V. Shantaram along with the coloured copy of his film "Sairandhree". The release in the market of records from this film unleashed a wave of mass popularity for film-music. From 1933 to 1938 the Prabhat Film Co. in Poona and the New Theatres Ltd. in Calcutta produced a galaxy of films with music which had a strong popular appeal. The melodies were mainly based on classical modes but were presented to audiences through the visual medium in an attractive setting. 'Amrit Manthan', 'Aadmi', 'Padosi', 'Sant Tukaram', 'Gopal Krishna', 'Maya-Machhindra', 'Dharmatma', 'Duniya-Na-Mane' etc. were released under the Prabhat banner while New Theatres Ltd. earned fame with 'Devdas', 'President', 'Chandidas', 'Vidyapati', 'Dhoop-Chhav', 'Jawab', 'Zindagi', 'Dushman' and 'Street-singer'. Singers like Shanta Apte, Govindrao Tembe, Shanta Hublikar, Ratnaprabha, Vasanti, Shahu Modak were projected through the Prabhat Productions. New Theatres Ltd. regaled viewers with songs rendered by K. L. Saigal, Pankaj Mullick, Kananbala, Pahari Sanyal, K. C. Dey and others.

The newly-formed National Gramophone Record Co. did give a jolt to the Gramophone Co. by causing the defection of V. Shantaram from the H.M.V. family. He was one of the directors of the new company and 'Young India' could thus count on the record business of the Prabhat Film Co. In that climate of patriotic resurgence, the call to boycott the British company and its records received a ready response. The National Record Co. thus made an excellent start and in the political conditions which were then prevalent in the country it stood a very good chance of capturing the record business. But the Gramophone Co. Ltd. had as its main assets the quality of the recording and of the processed record. The finished product of the 'Young India' label could hardly compete with the sophisticated quality of the records with the H.M.V. label. A disillusioned V. Shantaram returned to the fold of the Gramophone Co. Ltd. With their mainstay gone, the National Gramophone Record Co. could not survive for long and had to close down.

The appearance of records under the 'Polydor' label is a recent occurrence. 'Polydor' enjoys a big reputation in Europe for high-quality production and in the last ten years it has also made a headway here. 'The Gramophone Co. Ltd.' is now known as 'The Gramophone Co. of India, Ltd.' This is because, in accordance with government policy, equity share-holding by Indian investors has been effected. Yet another company under the trade-



Pankaj Mullick



K. C. Dey

name 'Indian Record Co.' has, it is learnt, recently made a debut in the gramophone world at Calcutta.

Till about 1920, all phonograph machines used to be imported and a phonograph in the drawing room was in those days a status symbol, very much like the telephone, refrigerator, motor car or television set of today. Around 1928-29, cheap machines manufactured in Japan invaded the market. They were so low-priced (each costing about Rs. 10 to Rs. 15) that even a person of average means could afford to purchase a machine. A little later, dealers in phonomachines started importing component parts from Japan and Switzerland and, using locally made wooden cabinets, assembled all these in Bombay, Calcutta and Delhi. The boom for gramophone records began with these cheap machines. These phonographs had a single standard speed of 78 R.P.M. Hence the playing time for one side of a disc of 10" size was a maximum of 3 minutes and 30 seconds. Later slightly larger-sized records of 12" (with an additional playing time of one minute) were considered suitable for the recordings of top-ranking artistes. These were naturally priced higher than the 10" discs.

### Artistes

When the Gramophone Co. tried to draw upon the repertoire of the exponents of classical music, it invariably faced serious difficulties. The musicians were reluctant to share their knowledge with others and make their treasures accessible to the public. They refused to record and, if they were at all persuaded to do so, would stipulate such high fees that recording them ceased to be commercially viable. The company, therefore, focussed attention on the more popular singers. It was easier to persuade them to

record and their discs earned large profits. In the initial period, along with the imported records, the company recorded and issued for sale discs made by these popular singers. Amongst these are many who are still remembered, even after a lapse of more than three decades, for their sweet voices and attractive style of presentation. The names of Jankibai, Malkajan, Goharjan, Mushtaribai, Kamla Zaria, Angurbala, Indubala, Dulari, Joharajan and Mehboobjan linger in our memories even today.

The other types of musician artistes, who were accessible and whose discs had a good sales potential, were the *quwali* and *ghazal* singers and the performers of *kirtana*-s and devotional songs. The *naat*-s (Muslim religious songs) and *quwali*-s of outstandingly popular singers like Pearu Ouwal, Kaloo Quwal, Bhai Chhela, Master Rohit, K. C. Dey, Ashraf Khan, Fakiruddin Quwal, Aga Faiz, Ali Hussain Pyarasahib still evoke affectionate response from listeners.

For centuries the poet saints of India propagated their teachings through their devotional songs. Tulsidasa and Surdasa in the north, Kabirdasa in the Punjab, Chaitanya Maha Prabhu in Bengal, Narsi Bhagat in Gujarat, Meerabai in Rajasthan, Dnyaneshwara, Eknatha, Namdeva, Tukarama in Maharashtra wrote hundreds of devotional songs which have been preserved

*M. S. Subbulakshmi in her teens, when she began recording*



*M. L. Vasanthakumari*



*D. K. Pattamal*

with reverence for centuries by devotees. These compositions provided artistes with rich and varied poetic material which found an immediate echo in the hearts of audiences. The Gramophone Co. took the decision to record a large number of such devotional compositions and amongst the artistes projected in this section were Juthika Ray, K. C. Dey, Dilip Kumar Roy, Master Vasant Amrut, Vishnupant Pagnis, Abharam Bhagat, Dula Bhagat, Fulajibuwa, Bai Sunderabai. Excerpts from the *Guru-Granth-Sahib* (the holy book of prayer of the Sikhs) and *Shabad* written by Guru Nanak and Guru Govind were immensely popular with the Sikh community.

I have confined my remarks so far to the North Indian scene partly because I have worked in the North for many years and my concern has been mostly with the Hindustani tradition, and partly also because the Hindustani system covers a much wider area and population. But the impact of the gramophone in the South has been considerable from the very early days.

Lovers of Karnatic music speak nostalgically of the records of Coimbatore Thayi, of Bangalore Nagaratnam, of the recordings of the incomparable Veena Dhanam and a 78 R.P.M. disc of Shanmukhavadiu (the mother of M. S. Subbulakshmi). Some of the great classical musicians of the early decades of this century—Veena Sheshanna, Bidaram Krishnappa, Ponnuswami Pillai and Ramaswami Pillai (Nagaswaram vidwans)—have all left behind them samples of their musicianship. The South, too, had its quota of stage stars—S. V. Subbia Bhagavatar, S. G. Kittappa, K. B. Sundarambal, all of whom recorded extensively.

Of the classical renderings of the '30s a very popular pressing was the rendering of *Nagamomu* by the late Musiri Subramania Iyer. Many of his



Palghat Mani Iyer



S. Balachander

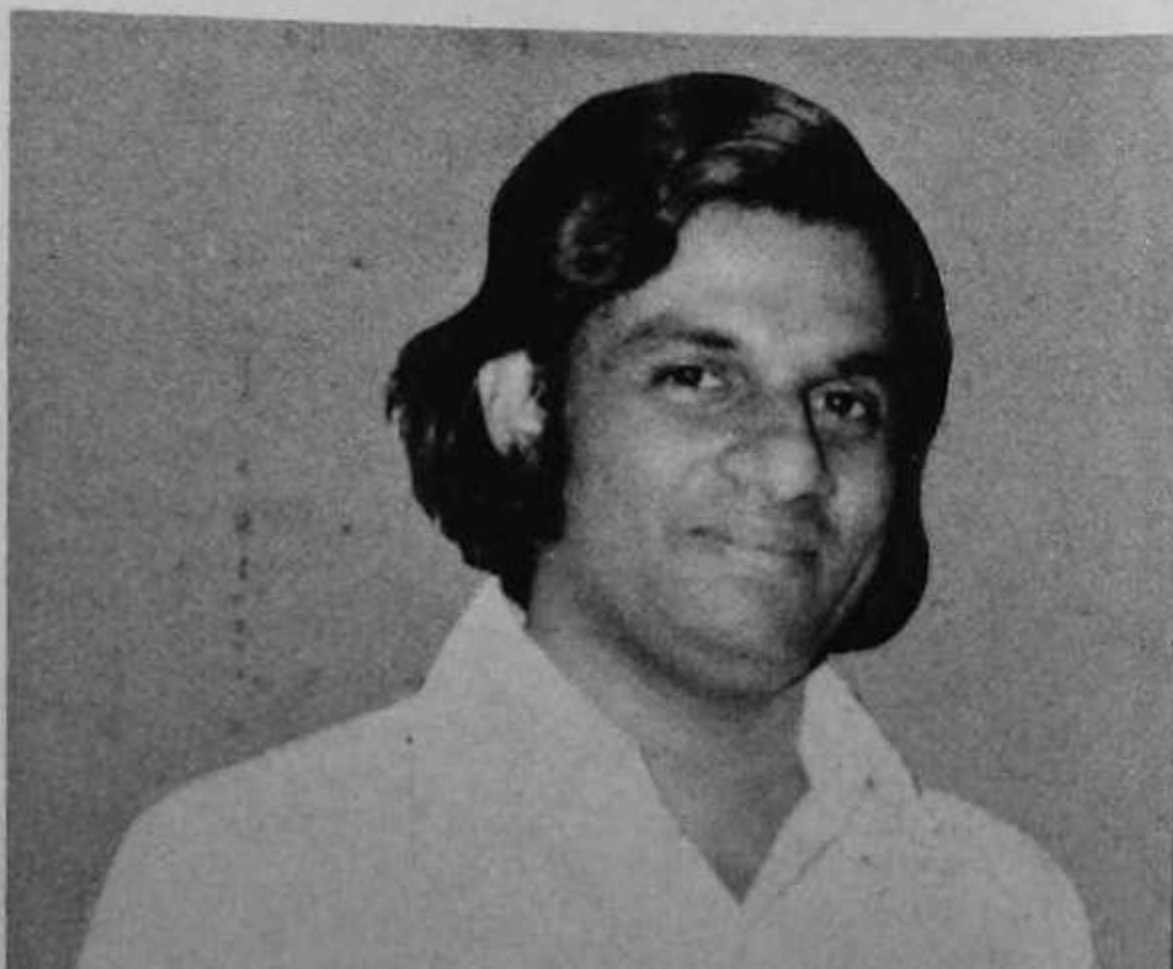
contemporaries—Chembai, Ariyakudi, Maharajapuram, G.N.B., Venkataswami Naidu (violin), Rajamanickam Pillai (violin), Chowdiah (violin), Rajaratnam (nagaswaram) have all left the imprint of their art on discs, though few of them recorded extensively.

In more recent days we have had LPs from such distinguished singers as D. K. Pattamal, M. L. Vasanthakumari; also from very distinguished instrumentalists like the great Palghat Mani Iyer (mridanga), K. S. Narayanaswami (veena), T. R. Mahalingam (flute), Ramani (flute), S. Balachander (veena), T. Vishwanathan (flute), M. S. Gopalakrishnan (violin). This is by no means a complete list but will give an idea of the wide representation of

N. Ramani



Yesudas



M. S. Subbulakshmi with Lata Mangeshkar

Karnatic music on discs. Finally there is M. S. Subbulakshmi who has cut more titles than any other exponent of the Karnatic tradition. There are the unique "Suprabhatams", a wide range of *varnam-s* and *kriti-s*, and a variety of *bhajan-s*.

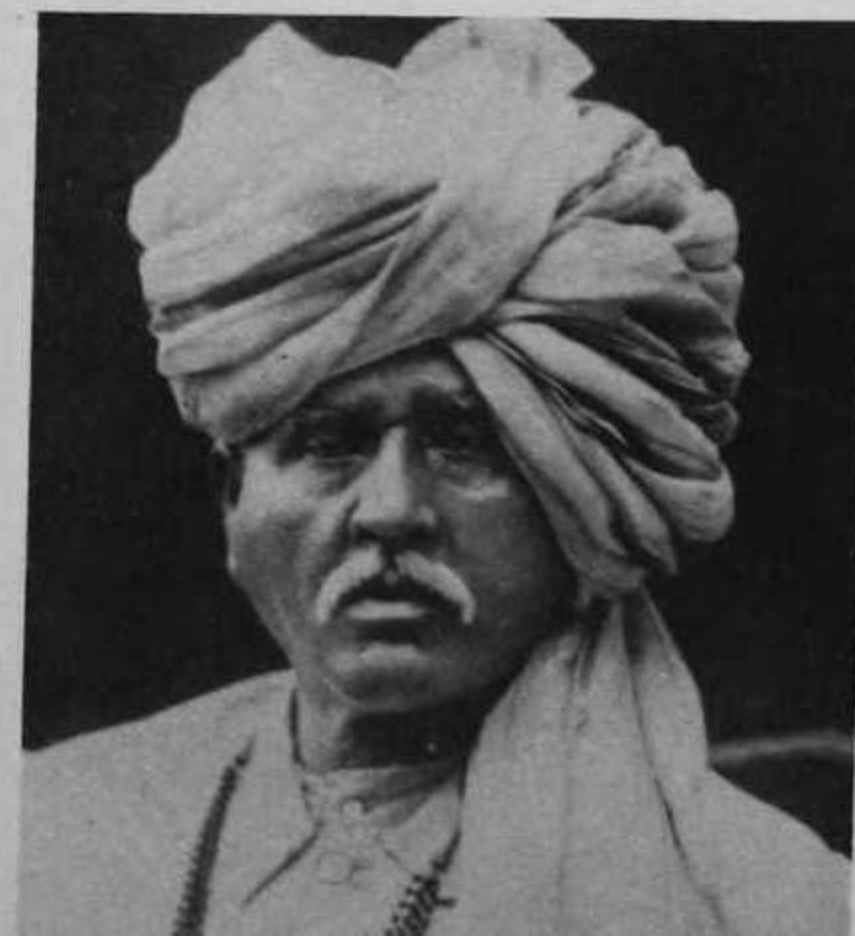
Of the many "playback" singers of the screen Yesudas is undoubtedly the biggest vogue today.

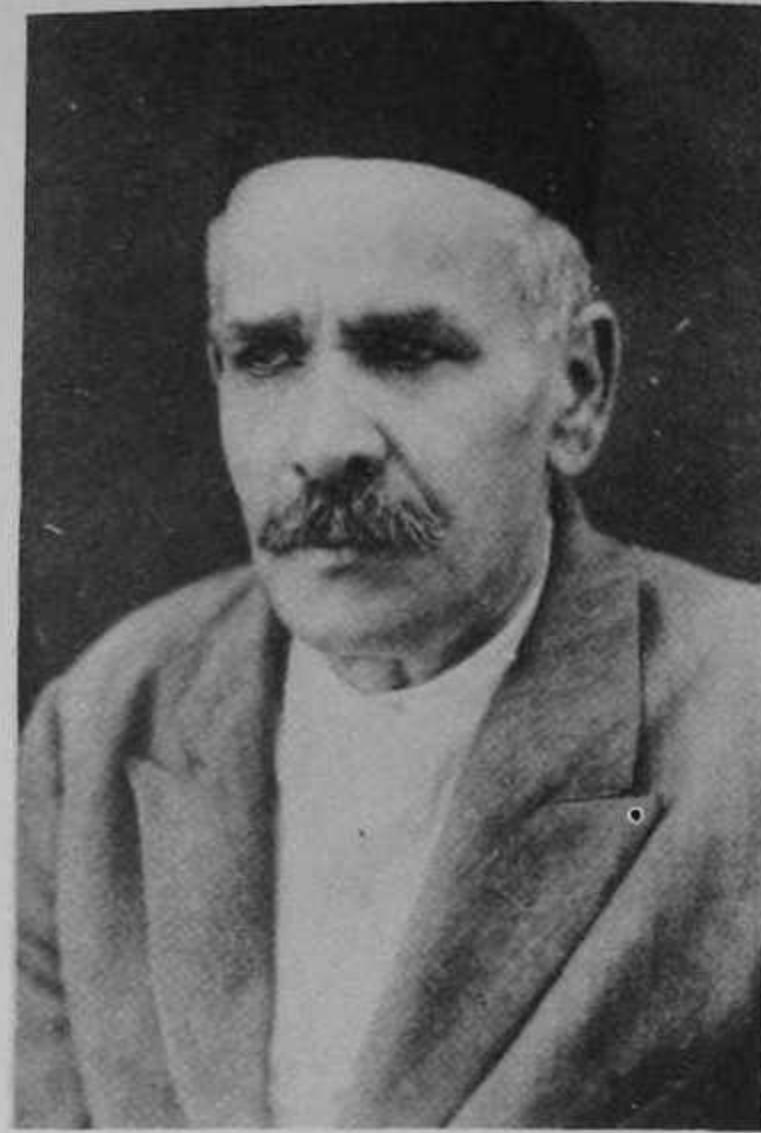
Narratives from the epics, mythological and historical episodes were recorded by Goswami Narayan, Pandit Ramanand, Kathavachak and others and were in great demand. In Maharashtra Shahirs P. D. Khadilkar,

Faiyaz Khan



Rahimat Khan





*Khansaheb Abdul Karim Khan*

*Ramkrishnabuwa Vaze*

Nanivadekar, Piraji Sarnaik and others recorded *powada*-s (ballads) capturing significant moments in the history of the Marathas. They adhered to the traditional style adopted three hundred years ago to awaken the heroic sentiment of the Maratha warriors and rouse them to fight the repressive rule of the Moghuls.

*Kesarbai Kerkar felicitating Mogubai Kurdikar*



*Bade Gulam Ali Khan with Munnawar, Ahmadjan Thirakhwa and friends*

The phonograph often proved to be a trend-setter in the field of music and determined public taste in a large measure. In Maharashtra, the immense popularity of stage music paved the way for interest in classical music. The great artistes of the period recorded by the Gramophone company include masters like Rahimat Khan, Faiyaz Khan, Abdul Karim Khan, Inayat Khan, Nissar Hussain Khan, Allauddin Khan, Amir Khan, Bade Gulam Ali Khan, Ahmadjan Thirakhwa, Ramkrishnabuwa Vaze, Narayanrao Vyas, Vinayakrao Patwardhan, Kesarbai Kerkar, the Dagar brothers, Mogubai Kurdikar, Omkarnath Thakur, Gangubai Hangal, Mallikarjun Mansur and

*Ram Narain*

*Vilayat Khan*



Hirabai Barodekar. In recent years this large repertoire has been further enriched by the Long Play recordings of outstanding artistes like Ravi Shankar, Ali Akbar Khan, Vilayat Khan, Bismillah Khan, Pannalal Ghosh, Bhimsen Joshi, Kishori Amonkar, Alla Rakha, D. V. Paluskar, Ram Narain, Kumar Gandharva, Pandit Jasraj and Jitendra Abhisheki.

Various companies have also recorded with great advantage many light-classical, minor modes and folk-songs from the different regions of India. Akhtari Faizabadi, better known in later times as Begum Akhtar, won unprecedented acclaim with her renderings of *ghazal-s* and *dadara-s* on Megaphone and later on the H.M.V. labels. Rasoolanbai, Siddheshwaridevi, Girjadevi and others became popular with their recordings of *thumri-s*, *tappa-s* and *dadara-s*. Jankibai, Goharjan, Malkajan and others (who have been mentioned earlier) had also recorded *hori-s*, *chaiti-s*, *sawani-s*, *dadara-s* and *ghazal-s*. The small companies in Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan even recorded songs containing the mutual abuses showered with gusto during weddings by the mothers of the bride and bridegroom. These Gali songs delighted listeners in villages.

After 1930 the *bhavageet-s* in Maharashtra opened an era of 'lyrical' music. To the writer of this article is given the credit for pioneering and popularising lyric-singing in Maharashtra. Compositions of eminent poets like B. R. Tambe, Madhav Julien, N. G. Deshpande, Anil, Yeshwant, Girish, Borkar, Kusumagraj, and others were recorded by him and others carried on the work. These records proved to be so popular that even stage-music had to change its pattern on the lines of *bhavageet-s*. In recent times, poems of well-known poets like G. D. Madgulkar, Mangesh Padgaonkar, Shanta Shelke have been recorded by Lata Mangeshkar, Asha Bhonsle, Manik Verma, Sudhir Phadke, Arun Date and other newcomers and these have all found favour with listeners.

Bhimsen Joshi



Mallikarjun Mansur



Ali Akbar Khan



Pannalal Ghosh

### Film Music

Between the years 1930 and 1940, there was much advance in the technique of film production. Once again, Bengal and Maharashtra led the way, producing pictures of high quality. New Theatres Ltd. in Calcutta and Prabhat Film Co. in Poona, each of these established a distinctive style in music through its films. The names of music-composers R. C. Boral, Timir Baran, Anupam Ghatak of Bengal and Master Krishnarao, Keshavrao Bhole, Dada Chandekar, Sudhir Phadke of Maharashtra are associated with the chaste, classical-based music which they scored for many a successful film. The songs of actor-singers K. L. Saigal, Pahari Sanyal, K. C. Dey, Kananbala, Shanta Apte, Shanta Hublikar, Shahu Modak, Govindrao Tembe, Vishnupant Pagnis left a lingering flavour, which still has its own appeal. It was V. Shantaram who in 1934 first introduced songs on discs from his film 'Sairandhree'. These records fascinated listeners and the Gramophone Co. was besieged by demands for songs from other films. It had to go all out to secure contracts from film-producers for exclusive rights to record the songs from their films. In those days transfer from a film-track was unheard of. The actor-singers on the screen had to re-record the songs in H.M.V. Studios and the procedure continued for nearly twenty years. In the first few years of the talkies, producers paid more attention to the production of pictures in regional languages like Bengali, Marathi, Telugu and Malayalam, and Hindi films were made on an experimental basis. As the inter-provincial market for film expanded, film-producers found it more profitable to make pictures in Hindi and ensure an all-India appeal. Bombay soon became known as the Hollywood of India and a crop of film companies appeared, the better known among them being Prabhat, Bombay Talkies, Filmistan, Prakash, Ranjit, Sagar, Minerva etc. This led to a sudden demand for new voices, for music-makers and musicians. This was the time when Devika Rani, Ashok Kumar, Arun Kumar, Pandit Pradeep, Motilal Ishwarlal, Kantilal, the comedian Charlie, Leela Chitnis,



Mr. Sohrab Modi, Director of the Minerva Film Co., presenting a bouquet to Mr. Subhash Chandra Bose when the latter went to witness Minerva's Prohibition Film: "Meehta Zahar." Songs from this film are available on "Twin" Records.

Snehaprabha, Sitaradevi, Naseembanu, Sheela, Savitadevi, Maya Banerji became popular on discs. At the same time, the period coincided with the discovery of the very fine musical talent of Noorjehan, Khursheed, Suraiya, Ameerbai Karnataki, Wahidan and other artistes. Ghulam Haider, Shyam Sunder, Rafiq Gaznavi, Naushad, Khemchand Prakash, C. Ramchandra, and Anil Biswas composed and directed music for films which soon won immense acclaim for their fine musical score. New styles appeared, leading to fast-changing trends in music-composition and soon their market appeal brought about a fusion of varied modes which might perhaps be described as a kind of national integration.

The introduction of play-back singing around the year 1950 opened a new chapter in film music. The technique of lending voice to non-musical heroes and heroines offered opportunities to a large number of male and female artistes possessing voices suitable for the mike. Lata Mangeshkar, Asha Bhonsle, Suman Kalyanpur, Arati Mukerjee, P. Sushila, Mohammed Rafi, Manna Dey, Mukesh, Hemant Kumar, Kishore Kumar and Talat Mahmud and newcomers Yesudas and Vani Jairam are now legendary figures and the number of their individual recordings has surpassed all expectations. Lata Mangeshkar's achievement is indeed phenomenal. She holds a world record for the number of songs rendered for films. They are estimated to be more than twenty thousand. She has sung in almost all the Indian languages and in addition to film songs, she has recorded devotional music and lyrics. Her voice is familiar in every corner of the country and popular in distant parts of the world.

The enthusiasm for Rock-Beat-Pop music in the west also influenced the "composition" and presentation of film music in India. Large orchestral ensembles of Indian and western musical instruments have become essential ingredients for the recording of a film song, resulting quite often in a crude fusion of the east and the west.

The demand for Indian discs in the international market has increased steadily. The India-made gramophone record finds its way to every corner of the world, the main markets being the U.K., U.S.A., the East European Countries, the Middle-East, the West Indies, East Africa, Malaysia, Singapore and Fiji. The orders from outside India for these records are so great that the Gramophone Co. Ltd. could register a phenomenal rise in its export trade.

For the broad mass of the Indian people, who are still burdened by poverty, the phonograph is still an item of luxury. Its educational potential has yet to be utilized. But its value as a mode of entertainment is generally recognized. After all, a phonograph brings to the owner music of his own choice and of the kind which is always at his command. It is undoubtedly true that the invention of Thomas Edison and Charles Cros has brought undescrivable happiness to countless homes in this country.



# The Impact of Recordings

Leonard Marcus

Recordings have had a more widespread influence on all aspects of music—composition, music education, listening, criticism, concert-giving, and musicology—than any other catalyst, including the more fundamentally revolutionary introductions of harmony and tonality.

## Composition

In 1967, the Rockefeller Foundation sponsored a questionnaire-and-interview survey of hundreds of composers in America. Almost unanimously, they indicated that recordings of their works were more important to them than either printed publication or live performance.

Composers have been radically influenced by recordings, both through the consequent easy familiarity they can have with other composers' music and through their own use of the record medium. In 1965, Milton Babbitt told Glenn Gould—who himself has for years performed publicly solely through recordings and broadcasts: "We have all been affected as composers, as teachers, as musicians by recordings to an extent that cannot possibly be calculated as yet . . . I don't think one can possibly exaggerate the extent to which the climate of music today is determined by the fact that the total Webern is available on records, that the total Schoenberg is becoming available."

The use of the record as a medium in compositional procedures had superficial beginnings as early as Leoncavallo's song *Mattinata*, "specifically written for the Gramophone" according to the label on its original 1904 recording. Later, in 1925, Igor Stravinsky composed his *Serenade in A* for piano "expressly for the record medium" although it is perfectly capable of being performed live. And, of course, Ottorino Respighi's popular *Pines of Rome*, of 1924, incorporates a recording of a nightingale's song in *The Pines of the Janiculum*. The post-World War II era brought with it the ubiquitousness of the tape recorder and the development of fundamentally tape-dependent works: the *musique concrète* technique of the late 1940s and 1950s; Varèse's *Poème électronique*, an eleven-channel tape prepared for a Le Corbusier-designed pavilion at the 1958 Brussels World Fair, where it emanated from 425 speakers; Morton Subotnick's *Silver Apples of the Moon* (1967). This last, an electronic work playable only as a recording, as so many pop-music arrangements are, was commissioned by Nonesuch Records, whose album cover proclaimed that, "for the first time, an original full-scale composition has been created expressly for the record medium."

## Music Education

Music education early adopted the phonograph as a tool, or more generally a crutch, in teaching both serious students and laymen. Teachers who could not adequately illustrate musical examples at the piano found in

records a means of demonstration. But, instructors could also bring entire orchestras into the classroom via the phonograph.

The 1930 Columbia *History of Music* and *L'Anthologie Sonore* of a half-dozen years later were prophetic achievements that enabled many students—not to mention many of their teachers—to hear for the first time such instruments as viols, lutes, virginals, clavichords, even harpsichords, as well as the then little-known music written for them. But by the following generation, record companies could sell baroque—even Medieval and Renaissance—music, recorded with original or re-created instruments, not primarily through educational channels, but to a general public that had by then developed—or, rather, *been developed to*, in large part by the phonograph—a degree of sophistication that would induce them to purchase such records for their ordinary home entertainment and enlightenment.

Today one can hardly find an educational project that has not been committed to records, from stethoscopic recordings for doctors or "Weather for Pilots" to multiple versions of the Complete Plays of Shakespeare.

And, of course, many conservatories, colleges, universities, and even some secondary schools have constructed recording studios to enable students to analyze their own performances, to re-hear their own compositions. Record-production itself became a conservatory course of study in 1967 when the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, New York, inaugurated a Recording Workshop into its summer curriculum.

One should not ignore a further strong interrelationship between schools, contemporary composers, and record companies: educational institutions have become by far the largest market for contemporary recordings, as well as a significant source for the music itself.

## Music Criticism

Records have enabled music critics to expand their knowledge, and for the better critics, their perspective, of music and performance practices. Unfortunately, recordings have also permitted unqualified reviewers to become "instant experts". Since a record collection gives a critic the opportunity to compare the superficialities of one artist's performance to another's with very little expenditure of intellectual energy, the main thrust of many of today's reviews has been just that, with few reviewers devoting much space to illuminating the music. New music has especially suffered from the inability of many critics to expostulate on it for their readers.

## Concert Life

The impact of recording on the concert hall has also been enormous, both for classical and popular performers. Today's performer may not even be able to make a successful career if he has not produced some distinguished recordings; the reputations in America of such major artists as Elisabeth Schwarzkopf, Mstislav Rostropovich, Herbert von Karajan, Joan Sutherland—not to mention the Beatles—were all well established by recordings before they had ever performed here. The popular music field especially has known many instances of performers who could not compete with

their technician-aided recordings in live appearances. There are those who feel that the phonograph actually bodes the demise of the concert hall, which, if it lasts at all, will do so for social, not musical, reasons.

### *Comparative Musicology*

The entire field of comparative musicology is a direct result of disc and tape recordings. Although the discipline may be said to have begun in 1779 with Jean Amiot's *Memoire sur la musique des Chinois*, it could not flower until supplied with phonographic tools, for much non-Western music is generally transmitted orally rather than through a written tradition and, as such, its performance practices—certainly in rhythm and intonation—cannot be accurately transcribed into Western notation. Since World War II, anthropologists and musicologists have visited the most remote parts of the world with tape machines to record aboriginal music before civilization either tainted this music or even wiped out the culture entirely. Yet as early as 1936, long before the availability of the portable tape recorder, G. Herzog (*Primitive and Folkmusic in the United States*) could estimate that over 14,000 recordings of "primitive" music were in principal U.S. collections.

The most recent studies have already been conducted as a race against time, or more specifically against the transistor radio, a ubiquitous commodity that is homogenizing the world's music.

And what, after all, does one hear on the radio but recordings? Here we have the ironic situation of recordings subverting one of the disciplines it was instrumental in developing.

### *Impact on Society*

Because recordings are replayed continuously, they can have a much more insidious impact on the minds of the impressionable than other forms of communication. The rational message gets through on its initial understanding; it is the visceral message that benefits from continuous repetition. When and if video succeeds in attaching itself to general home recordings, this impact might even become totalitarian. We know the influence such popular songs as "Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds" had in making drug-taking respectable among the youth of the 1960s, and the influence the politically-oriented pop singers had in creating the climate necessary to end the American war in Vietnam. What propaganda will be inflicted upon the minds of the malleable in the future will be determined by those who control the various recording industries, whether their aim is the acquisition of money or the perpetuation of political power. Personally, I have more faith in the money-grubbers; they tend to listen with greater sympathy to their musicians. A statist regime tolerates revolutionary, upsetting art only when it doesn't understand it. But a capitalist will encourage the most anti-capitalist art—as long as he can make money at it.

## The Role of Recordings

Jacob Siskind

In the past three-quarters of a century the recording industry has grown from the production of home entertainments of questionable artistic merit to a behemoth that has enormously influenced musical taste. At first this came about almost by accident—today the influence is direct and often oppressive. At the turn of the century records, the flat discs invented by Emil Berliner, could hold up to five minutes of music and so recordings were made of a repertoire that could conveniently fit into that format—either naturally or by stretching or lopping off offending parts.

Those who collected recordings, and hundreds of thousands were sold despite the high price and the poor sound of the products of the period, were conditioned to listen in five minute spurts. The standard concert repertoire of the period was ignored by companies in favor of little works of considerable charm which could be recorded again and again, inexpensively.

Certain artists flourished in this atmosphere. Those who had already specialized in the miniature were soon household names in the smallest hamlets. Others who did not shine in this repertoire, or who refused to record these pieces, were ignored by the record companies and were unknown to the mass audience. In the normal course of events this was of small importance in the first half of the present century. Violinists like Bronislaw Huberman or Joseph Szigeti were able to have careers of international importance despite the fact that they did not record as prolifically as did Heifetz, Kreisler or Elman. Today that situation is no longer true. International careers without recording contracts are singular exceptions.

Record companies felt little obligation to music *per se* in the first quarter of the present century—their only consideration was sales and survival. That too has changed only marginally in the past seventy-five years.

The same is true of their attitude to composers or to the history of performance in the present century. We are able to sample the artistry of performers of the first five decades of the twentieth century only if they were under contract to one of the major recording companies. The same is true of composers interpreting their own works.

It is undeniable that Sir Edward Elgar was invited to conduct a number of his own works in the 1920s and 1930s; that Prokofiev recorded one of his concerti and few short pieces; that Stravinsky conducted some of his own music on records at the same period—but these were exceptions rather than the rule. Medtner's music was recorded by the composer only with the help of a substantial private grant. Other composers were ignored.

The coming of electrical recordings in the 1920s stirred a minor

revolution, as did each major innovative technical move in the industry. The improvement in recorded sound encouraged many who had treated the instrument as a toy to look at it once again.

Complete works were now recorded and enjoyed to an extent far beyond the dreams of those who undertook these projects. Major works of the standard repertoire were now available on records and there were sorties into more esoteric areas. Artur Schnabel undertook the mammoth project of recording the complete Beethoven Sonatas over a period of five years on about 150 discs and the project made his name a household word for generations, where before he was known primarily among his fellow musicians. Haydn Trios and String Quartets were rescued from the hands of amateurs, and Hugo Wolf songs were known beyond the limited circle of the lieder recital. Obviously there was a physical limit to all this. 78 r.p.m. records were heavy and fragile. A collection of several thousand discs was prohibitively expensive to purchase, prohibitively expensive to store and virtually impossible to replace should a record be dropped on the floor or gouged by a falling needle.

Fortunately the long-play record came along in the late 1940s. One record now contained as much music as a half-dozen 78s, weighed considerably less than one 78, was considerably less brittle and less breakable but more susceptible to surface damage. This also meant a considerable saving in material, manpower and production time and cost, since one record now contained the music for which one previously had to produce six. The LP was a revolutionary step forward. Small companies were now able to finance the production of records and this meant that artists and composers previously unknown to the general audience were suddenly exposed to a new public. Composers like Bruckner and Mahler, Vivaldi and Telemann were now found in record collections in every home. People who had not heard of this music before were now more familiar with it than the musicologists of a previous generation.

No longer did one have to take the word of an historian or biographer about the relative merits of seminal composers. One could hear the music in one's own home readily where previous generations had had to wait for the visits of obscure ensembles playing obscure music in rather obscure fashion. These recordings generated ancillary revolutions. Music of the baroque and pre-baroque periods became fashionable. So did the instruments of the period. Musicologists were hard put to keep pace.

Record jackets contained volumes of information previously found only in libraries. Some of the research was spotty but here too gains were made quickly. People learned about a "Bach Bow" and only a few years later learned it was a fiction. For a brief period in the 1950s it was possible to learn more musical-historical fact from record jackets than from some university courses—but that situation was soon rectified.

Unheralded artists were suddenly made famous. Many soon disappeared into deserved oblivion but others survived.

But the flood of music and recordings soon became a form of pollution. The public was soon sated. At this point the industry introduced the stereo revolution and the character of the record buyer changed drastically. Those who were interested in the content of the records were replaced to a large extent by those who were interested in sound *per se*, or in the status symbol quality of the sound system that filled the environmental gap once closed by the living room piano. Record buyers cared less about music and more about appearances. Until Color TV came along. Then record sales really plummeted.

In an effort to entice new buyers record companies turned to time-worn gimmicks—the kind of repertoire that attracted the very first record audiences at the turn of the century. Releases of short works, or, worse, snippets from longer works flooded the market under the catch-all Greatest Themes from . . . , Greatest Hits by . . . or Festival of Hits. These series were evidently predicated on the theory that the adult attention span for serious music cannot tolerate more than 5 minutes exposure. Earlier, the introduction of magnetic tape triggered another revolution. Now it was no longer necessary to record in 5 minute spurs or takes. Longer takes were possible and errors could be excised or concealed with the use of a razor blade and adhesive tape. A new breed of performer was developed—one who was incapable of giving a satisfactory performance before a live audience but who could sustain performances with the collusion of the recording engineer and the tape editor.

There was a certain sterility to these recorded performances, evident to the careful listener as a lack of inner tension, but the cleanliness of the recordings appealed to a public and a kind of artist who grew up in the shadow of that arch-clean exponent of literalness—Arturo Toscanini, who dominated North American musical taste for the last two decades of his career. The arrival of the tape recorder triggered another revolution. Home recorders were now available to anyone and people could as easily record off-the-air as buy records.

Amateur performers and composers proliferated, and talent was superceded by imagination. Composers turned to tape recorded and tape created sounds for their musical materials and anyone with a tape deck and a pair of scissors was soon a composer. When these possibilities had been plumbed composers turned to randomly produced noises for their source material. The confused public began to lose interest in serious music and record sales and concert attendance plummeted. Major recording companies seriously considered dropping their classical catalogues and some ceased all local record production, importing their releases from a central bank.

Attempts to revitalize the industry with merchandising gimmicks like those listed above proved self-defeating. However, the scene is not as bleak as perhaps I paint it.

The record industry has done musical history a great service in the twentieth century. It has given us, albeit by accident, an abbreviated history

of musical performance of the past seventy-five years. It has given us insights into the developmental processes of the great artists of the century. It has also mirrored and influenced public taste.

The creativity of some composers has been carefully documented. Stockhausen, Penderecki, Henze and Orff, to name only a few, have been invited to supervise the recording of their own music. But this has been haphazardly accomplished—Bartok and Schoenberg were sparsely recorded in their own lifetimes. Too often the excesses of the recording industry have resulted in music pollution. Fifteen recordings of *Carmina Burana* are 12 too many and 37 of *Eine Kleine Nachtmuski* are 30 too many.

Where does the recording industry take us from here?

In the past twenty years companies have begun to influence the course of music performance more directly. The NBC Symphony and the Philharmonia Orchestra were conceived primarily as recording orchestras. Ensembles under exclusive contract to one company have often favored the hiring of soloists and guest conductors under contract to the same company.

Planned recording sessions have often determined concert programs and personnel, and artists have begun to choose their repertoire according to the fashions in the recording industry.

Orchestral players seek employment with ensembles that have recording contracts. Conductors are hired as musical directors according to their recording contracts or contacts, and recordings play an even larger role in the life of the musical community. Cities with recording orchestras attract the best players who in turn, through their teaching, enrich the musical life of succeeding musical generations of the community.

This is fine for those communities with such ensembles—it is less happy for the vast number of locales without such support. And of course there is the pre-recorded tape revolution—will it supercede the disc, and will it and the QUAD revolution render all pre-1970 performances obsolete and will these soon disappear? Will serious music recording survive the growing inflationary cycle? Will they survive the enormous costs of production? Will recordings subsidize growing orchestral deficits? Will recording companies become the last repositories of contemporary views of pre-twentieth century music?

Will recording companies continue to dominate the concert field as they have in the past? Will artists without contracts to major companies flounder while those with such contracts flourish? Will the recording industry continue to wag the musical dog?

Does the recording industry have a responsibility to posterity or is it only responsibility to survive?

Hopefully answers to these questions will be forthcoming before the end of the present century and before the recording industry commits suicide.

## The Audible Past

David Lowenthal\*

What becomes of music, speech, and other sounds, natural and manmade, when they cease reverberating? How far do previous sounds differ from those of today? How much do we remember of what we hear? What meanings and emotions attach to sounds from the past? Why do familiar sounds often trigger nostalgic yearning? What sounds do we regard as antiquated, and why?

On these topics little is known and less has been written. For each of us the answers depend, in part, on our age, our cultural heritage, and our musical and other auditory experiences. This essay is a first exploration into past sounds and our feelings about them.

The world we live in is a product of the past; the very familiarity of its features implies the memory of previous experience. Awareness of the past through mementoes and monuments is essential to individuals and to nations; the recognition of continuity gives meaning to the present and hope to the future.<sup>1</sup> Vision is the main sensory mode through which we apprehend the past, but it is not the only one. We are aware of the passage of time and the endurance of things through other senses too.

This assertion may seem hardest to demonstrate with respect to sound. No noise that human beings are capable of hearing is really old. Radio signals from the stars, to be sure, have taken many light years to reach the earth, but these play an inconspicuous role in our acoustical landscape. No sound that we actually hear is more than a few moments old; the rapid decay of sound energy coupled with our limited capacity for hearing makes even the loudest noise undetectable soon after its inception.

In one sense, however, sound seems the very essence of time. Aural impulses have long been the main way of marking off years, seasons, weeks, days, hours, and minutes: bells, chimes, and other clock mechanisms provide a manmade counterpoint to the natural periodicity of pulse and heartbeat, and enhance our awareness of connections between past and present.

Yet to recover the sounds of the past is an infinitely more difficult enterprise than to restore the visual images of previous landscapes. Countless visible relics, however eroded, decayed, or selectively preserved they may be, nonetheless survive to tell us much about the bygone material world and its spatial organization. But of sounds from the past, save for a small and relatively recent repertory, recorded for the most part under laboratory or studio conditions, not a trace remains. No recording exists of the loudest

\*I am grateful to Arnold Berleant, Aldo Ghisalbert, Malcolm Macdonald, and Barbara Parry for comments and suggestions.

known noise in world history, the explosion of Krakatoa volcano on August 26-28, 1883, which was heard 3,000 miles away, and it is probable that no one now alive would remember hearing it.

Of sounds before the phonograph, we know only what can be surmised from indirect evidence: the noises of presumably unchanging natural or human activities; the sounds produced by ancient musical instruments; the performance of music preserved in notational form; the written accounts of those who heard and reacted to the noises and music of their times. "We know how Chopin played," as Gerald Abraham puts it, "only through the playing of the pupils of the pupils of his pupils."<sup>2</sup> And their memory, like all of ours, is a notoriously fallible guide. Earwitnesses are to be trusted even less than eyewitnesses. "Long term memory tends to 'idealize' and isolate . . . sounds," notes Barry Truax,<sup>3</sup> which is one reason why the taperecorded past seems quite unlike the sounds we imagine we remember.

But however deficient these indirect modes of historical reconstruction may be, they are often invaluable. The timbre, tone and rhythm of a clap of thunder, the beating of surf against the shore, have probably varied little over many millennia; the ancient flute sounds today much as it did when first made; the clash of spear against shield, the ring of the hammer at the forge, the sizzle of meat on a neolithic spit can be fairly accurately reproduced by reactivating their constituent parts.

Other features of past soundscapes, however, are now unrecoverable: the utterances of extinct species, the clangor of early metallurgy, the intonations of ancient languages, the distinctive susurrus of obsolete domestic crafts. Not least, the words spoken on any particular occasion throughout history are gone beyond recall. For most of this we lack even indirect evidence. Least accessible is the total ensemble of sounds that characterized past epochs, the interplay of background and foreground noises that made up the daily soundscape heard in each community and locale.

We do have some clues to these things, for we know that the sounds of nature antedate those of man, and that machine noise follows the man-made sounds of pre-industrial times. Nostalgia for past sounds indeed centers on our efforts to re-capture, or re-experience, the soundscape patterns that we associate with earlier, simpler, more natural epochs. Particularly do we sometimes long for silence, that interval between sounds so seldom present in the interstices of our electronic age. Nostalgia sometimes deceives us about the past; not even screeching jets and thundering subway trains could be much worse than the wheeled traffic of late 19th century London.

*The noise . . . was a thing beyond all imaginings . . . The hammering of a multitude of iron-shod hairy heels upon (the granite 'sets' of the streets), the deafening, side-drum tattoo of tyred wheels jarring from the apex of one set to the next like sticks dragging along a fence; the creaking and groaning and chirping and rattling of vehicles . . . the jangling of chain harness and the clanging or jingling of every other conceivable thing else,*

*augmented by the shriekings and bellowings . . . raised a din that . . . is beyond conception. It was not any such paltry thing as noise. It was an immensity of sound.*<sup>4</sup>

The everyday sounds of the past were different, yes, but not necessarily preferable, as we are often tempted to suppose, to those of today.

Nevertheless, the city dweller who retreats to the rural countryside, or anyone who sojourns for a time in the wilderness, rightly supposes that the change of locale brings him in contact with earlier or previous soundscapes. It is difficult wholly to escape the everyday sounds of modern life, for the internal combustion engine and long-distance communications are almost omnipresent. But today's natural and rural environments bear at least some resemblance to those of earlier epochs, and by listening to what happens there we can partly recapture the soundscapes of the past. Just how much today's natural or rural sounds replicate yesterday's cannot be determined, however. A desire for both authenticity and specificity animates our continuing search for ways to recover the actual sounds of the past.

The capacity or ability to recapture such sounds is a recurrent theme of imaginative literature. Baron Munchausen describes a winter so cold that a hunter's tune froze in his bugle, emerging as audible notes only the following spring. Rabelais's Pantagruel, sailing on the confines of the Frozen Sea, is amazed, while seeing nothing, to hear a great din—the booming of cannon, the whistling of bullets, the shouts and groans of men, the jostling of armor, the clashing of battle axes, the neighing of horses; all these sounds of a great battle, fought there the previous winter, had frozen in the air and were only now tumbling down and melting into audibility.<sup>5</sup> The "Journeymen to the East" in Hesse's *Glass Bead Game* include itinerant instrumentalists and minstrels whose "mystic identification with remote ages and cultural conditions" enabled them "to perform the music of earlier epochs with perfect ancient purity . . . exactly as if all the subsequent modes, refinements, and virtuoso achievements were still unknown."<sup>6</sup> The Latvian parapsychologist Raudive describes "electronic seances" during which recognizable voices of the dead (including those of Goethe and Hitler) mysteriously appeared on recordings or through radio transmission, sometimes demanding their own wave-length.<sup>7</sup>

One elaborate cosmophonic scheme for "recovering all the lost sounds of the past" is based on the difference in velocity between sound and light waves. "Any sound spreads out radially from its source and rises in a spherical wave-front through the atmosphere" and into empty space beyond, not lost but just more and more diluted, for ever and ever. Because a light beam would take only a day to "overtake sound that left the earth thousands of years before . . . an undirected flash concentric with the sound-front it was chasing . . . would be back-scattered in phase, retrace its path, and . . . reconcentrate at Earth bearing a.m. and f.m. modulation from the original sounds, backwards and speeded up about 500,000 times." To recover a sound from any time and place, we need only "wait for the orbiting

earth to carry our lightsource" to where that point was in space at the time, and fire out our flash. "The returning flicker, decoded by space-borne photo-diode arrays, will reveal at last the mating cries of mammoths, the recitations of Homer, first performances of the master-works of music, and endless trivial gossip" from ages past.<sup>8</sup>

Yet another archaeological dreamer surmises that, by analogy with the sound that needles re-evolve in record grooves, the voices of plasterers of past millennia may be caught in the masonry of ancient walls and temples, awaiting only the proper stylus to come to life once more.

The desire to regain audible history bespeaks the power of sound to transport us back to the past. To hear, or even just to remember, a familiar tune, can instantly call to mind long-vanished scenes and events. The playing of childhood melodies was said to have triggered fatal outbreaks of nostalgia among Swiss soldiers serving in France and Belgium during the 17th and 18th centuries. The *Kühe-Reihen* or *ranz-des-vaches*, rustic tunes to which herds were driven to Alpine pastures, revived Swiss recollections of their homeland, with disastrous effects on their health; consequently those who played, sang, or even whistled such tunes were severely punished. "I have never seen a picture of the Alps which made them as real as an alpine melody can," wrote Sénancour.<sup>9</sup> The music acts as a "memorative sign," according to Rousseau's *Dictionary of Music*. The tune, "a fragment of the past," in Starobinski's words, revives in the imagination all our former life . . . . The conscience comes to be haunted by an image of the past which is at once definite and unattainable. The image of childhood reappears through a melody, only to slip away, leaving us a prey to this 'passion de souvenir'.<sup>10</sup>

Music is not the only sound to arouse such memories; the bubbling of springs and the murmuring of streams, even certain vocal inflections, can also be evocative. Indeed, Sénancour felt that "the sounds emanating from sublime places make a deeper, more lasting impression than do their visual features."<sup>11</sup> The significance of sound dominates the inhabitants of Updike's imaginary planet, Minerva: "an elderly Minervan wishing to memorialize his life, would remember it almost exclusively in terms of music he had heard, or had made."<sup>12</sup>

As souvenir likenesses of ourselves, however, recordings of speech and other personal sounds lack the appeal of photographs; the camera satisfies people's desires for pictures of themselves, phonograph records are popular because they reproduce the sound of music and "other cultural objects," as Stanley Milgram notes.<sup>13</sup> Photograph albums of departed ancestors and holidays of long ago, framed portraits of parents and spouses and children, are unlikely to be superseded by past parental conversations, by toasts and witticisms from festive occasions, or by declamations of favorite offspring, even when such sounds have been taped for posterity's sake. Just as the truly "old" films are those we think of as silent, so do our own pasts somehow defy crystallization in sound.

Any sound, if memory is vivid, may evoke the past. But certain sounds in particular seem to incarnate it. What are the aspects of music and other sounds that induce us to sense them as old, stemming from antiquity or surviving from a remote past? Musical themes, tones, or styles seem old when we identify them as types of early or archaic forms. Familiarity with the history of music compels the auditor to "recognize" what he hears and to locate it chronologically, even if he has never heard it before. Real or fancied similarity to some known work persuades us to link new music to some past epoch. Even the use of a particular key may evoke the musical past. Thus long accumulated associations with major and minor modes make it difficult for some cognoscenti to "hear B minor without our subconscious being stirred by memories of the *Kyrie* of Bach's *Mass*, the first movement of the *Unfinished Symphony*, and Tchaikovsky's *Pathétique*."<sup>14</sup>

The timbre as well as the structure of music may suggest the past. Certain instruments, whatever their actual age, produce tones that are generally recognized as archaic. The recognition stems from our expectation, based on a mixture of experience and belief, that early musical instruments were characteristically thin, reedy, quavering, or nasal; from the absence of a well-tempered pitch; or from certain acoustic properties—the castrato voice, for example—that are no longer to be found.

The presumption of antiquity may be mistaken: not only many early instruments have the archaeological authenticity of the Ukrainian mammoth bones, so cut and shaped that Soviet scholars could deduce that Cro-Magnon man 20,000 years ago used them as percussion instruments; modern tests on them, as Bibikov describes, yield "hard, resonant, and musically expressive" sounds.<sup>15</sup> But many so-called early instruments are in fact copies or reconstructions of originals; we have little firm evidence about how early music sounded; some modern music is intentionally written for antique instruments or set to deliberately anachronistic language, like Stravinsky's *Lyke-Wake Cantata*.

Moreover, temporal comparisons are valid only within a given musical tradition; the timbre of some Eastern music, for example, resembles that of pre-Renaissance Europe. However, it is the presumption of antiquity that concerns us, not its veracity. Music written in a deliberately archaic style enhances our awareness of temporal depth even when we know the semblance of age is contrived.

A presumption of antiquity also attaches to sounds that seem worn, flawed, or partly obliterated. Such tones strike the ear as being either products of ancient forces or end results of processes of decay. A scratchy record, a muffled church bell, a wheezy car engine give the illusion of having come from long ago because their tones suggest much prior use. A cracked or quavering voice conveys a sense of time past because we may assume it belongs to an old man or woman.

The feeling of time such sounds evoke, according to John Cornwell, explains why recording studios choose "not to make the conversion of old

78s into modern LPs too perfect"; when the imperfections and scratches were taken out "they lost their atmosphere." The eroded effect cannot be reproduced merely by using the original apparatus afresh. "Trying to get that authentic 'old' sound," Cornwell recounts, the Beatles once "asked us to bring all our old-fashioned microphones of the 1940s era . . . Unfortunately it didn't sound much different from up-to-date microphones."<sup>16</sup>

Words sung or spoken may be another high road to antiquity. Songs, chants, and other vocalizations connote age when they employ antiquated language or refer to historical personages or epochs. References to bygone persons and places, obsolete vocabulary, and archaic musical style and instrumentation converge to create compelling illusions of antiquity, as in Gregorian chants.

Words or eroded sounds often combine with aural memories to conjure up past images. Larkin describes how recorded music can evoke a vanished scene:

*The record was old-fashioned, and had a tinny quality only partly due to the needle. The tune it played had been popular for perhaps a week or two, or perhaps even for as long as a musical comedy had run in London, but was now quite forgotten. The orchestra that played it did so in what had been the fashion of the moment, with little empty tricks of syncopation that recalled the outmoded dresses of the girls that had danced to it. It was strange to think it had once sounded modern. Now it was like an awning propped in the sun, nearly white, that years ago had been striped bright red and yellow.*<sup>17</sup>

The content and condition of the musical reproduction together suggest outworn tastes, frayed and faded fabrics, evanescent popularity.

Auditory like visual experience often makes natural things seem previous to manmade ones. Rocks, trees, lichen may look older than houses or highways because we assume that nature generally antedates artifice. The sounds of nature may similarly suggest a primeval scene. For Larkin's antagonist, "as far as age was concerned, sheer age that was almost timelessness, the sound of the trees was more impressive" than an ancient Oxford church. "The surrounding treetops settling and unsettling with an endless sifting of leaves . . . filled the air with whispering of eternity, . . . making this place, famous as it was, like all other places."<sup>18</sup> But the rustle of wind in trees, like the atavistic charm of breaking waves, is not so much ancient as it is eternal. Such sounds betoken not the historical past but the primordial scene, a time *previous* to history.

Nature antedates civilizations, and so natural sounds serve as surrogates for pastoral as well as for prehistoric ways. This may be one reason why music most commonly heard outdoors—the skirling of bagpipes, the pealing of bells, the thump of steel drums—conveys a sense of antiquity; we associate it with bygone days because we hear it in a "natural" setting. Alan Lomax romantically characterizes the music of a contemporary primitive band, the Mbuty Pygmies, who "have lived for many millennia in remarkable

balance with nature," as "the sound of a Golden Age that has somehow survived into the present."<sup>19</sup>

The sounds of decay, like its visual images, also evoke a feeling of desuetude. A crumbling stone wall, an ivy-covered building, a mossy roof are felt to be old because they are apparently weathering back to age-old nature. Similarly, tunes, speech, and other manmade noises patterned after the sounds of nature or decaying so as to resemble them impress hearers as akin to primeval.

We tend to assume that sounds distant in space are also remote in time; far away and long ago seem intimately interwoven. The experience of echoes bears this out in paradoxical fashion. As reverberations in amplified space, they echo sounds further away but *after* the original sound. Yet by making us conscious of the original sound as *previous*, echoes bring temporal awareness to the ear. Pretended echoes in music, as in the tenor duets of Monteverdi's *Vespers*, heighten the auditor's sense of duration.

The growth of interest in sounds stemming both from nature and from the human past mirrors increasing disenchantment with the noises felt to be most characteristic of the present day. Sonic violence and the cacophony of urban and industrial sound force many to take refuge from the modern acoustic environment behind soundproofed walls or earplugs. Others evince their displeasure with the sounds around them by devoting themselves to performing and listening to early music; the numbers attending concerts and buying recordings of music more than three centuries old shows that professional musicians are not the only devotees of music from the past.<sup>20</sup>

But the preference for the aural past goes beyond music; it questions the quality of the whole modern soundscape. The broad-gauge blur of the machine-dominated environment creates sounds that are inherently boring. "In the past the trains either whistled more or we heard them better," reminisced one old lady about the 1920s. "They had more personality."<sup>21</sup>

This is the quality that makes so many sounds of the past a precious legacy, now in danger of being lost through obsolescence, and that gives purpose to the World Soundscape Project's effort to record certain sounds before they vanish. Such sounds include the ringing of old cash registers, clothes being rubbed on a washboard, butter being churned, a razor being stropped, a kerosene lamp, the squeak of leather saddle bags, hand coffee grinders, milk cans rattling on horse-drawn vehicles, heavy doors being clanked shut and bolted, school hand bells, wooden rocking chairs on wooden floors, the quiet explosion of old cameras and hand-operated water pumps.<sup>22</sup>

A special auditory quality often associated with the past is silence. We are so accustomed today to pervasive background noise that when it is absent we instantly feel that we have come on the scene too late—or too soon. The absence of motor traffic in a normally busy thoroughfare, the cessation of Muzak in a restaurant, the closure of an airport loudspeaker system, the failure of a movie soundtrack—such events half persuade us we are in

another time, the past if we were accustomed long ago to the absence of the noise, the future if we have never experienced such surroundings without it.

Critical reactions to the present soundscape also help to make us aware that the audible environment has a temporal character. Just as concert audiences have grown used to hearing chronologically sequential programs, so does the whole sonic world begin to acquire historical markers. We tend more and more to date the distinctive elements of the soundscape medley: the crash of waves and the wind in the trees seem eternal; bird-song is both seasonal and cyclical; voices seem either old or new depending on their age and familiarity; traffic sounds are placed in time because we have experienced, or heard recordings of, trains and cars and planes of various vintages; music and Muzak have temporal connotations that differ depending on where and how we hear them. Even when we do not consciously attend to these sounds their temporality affects us. As we keep incorporating past sounds into our present lives, the auditory medley takes on an increasingly diachronic character. We hear in the present but simultaneously recognize elements, tonalities, and themes from many pasts.

Those of us who are thus aware of the aural past cannot regain the innocent ear of the purely synchronous present. We identify some sounds as characteristic of today, others—even when deliberately contrived to give a sense of the past—as peculiar to previous epochs. When such sounds are actually encountered, in primitive societies or natural surroundings, our historical awareness makes their occurrence seem anachronistic. Historical consciousness makes us listen to many sounds and soundscapes as though they were *passé*, whether or not they really are.

Changes in the technology and purpose of sound reproduction also make us aware of temporal differences. Initially recordings aimed to preserve actual acoustic events for future listeners.<sup>23</sup> Aside from musical pleasure, recordings served mainly as an archive. In recent years, recording purposes have diverged. On the one hand, events are taped so that aural history—speeches, wars, sporting events—may be accurately transmitted to posterity. But oral history programs, in which men and women recount to an interviewer their memories of past figures and events, now supplement live recordings. Oral history tapes may be transcribed, but the vocalized recall remains valuable for verisimilitude; we want to hear what old so-and-so sounded like, whatever he may be talking about, for voices embody much of our impression of people.

On the other hand, present-day musical recordings are more and more divorced from actual concerts or public arenas: they are studio presentations, not real world recollections. Unless listeners are intentionally nostalgic, they nowadays seldom expect recordings to sound like concert performances; instead they prefer a multi-track machine and close microphones that yield "unnatural sound and balance relationships between individual instruments," notes Adrian Hope.<sup>24</sup> The more recorded sounds are divorced from environmental—spatial and temporal—constraints, the more perfect they are considered to be.

But time will alter the meaning even of these sounds. As today's recordings fade into the past they will inevitably take on historical significance, no matter whether the aim of those who create and listen to them now is to preserve the present, to recapture the past, to anticipate the future, or to provide an ultimate and timeless listening experience.

What can be concluded from all this? Given our present level of technology, past sounds, strictly speaking, appear to be irrecoverable. Sounds persist only in memory, often evoked by associations, and in their influence on imagination. What we can reconstruct from indirect evidence, however, suggests that in many important respects past soundscapes differed substantially from those of today. It is partly because of these differences that we remain so strongly attached to sounds we consider to be antiquated, whether or not they are truly old.

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— Editor.

## News and Notes

### *UNESCO Celebrates the 100th Anniversary of the Invention of Sound Recording*

Sound recording year, i.e. the 100th anniversary of the invention of sound recording, was given an impressive send off during a week of celebrations organized in Paris by IFPI (International Federation of Producers of Phonograms and Videograms).

The week was launched on Monday, 18 April, by a ceremony at UNESCO headquarters. Distinguished speakers paid tribute to the two inventors of the process of fixing and reproducing sound, namely Thomas Edison in the United States and Charles Cros in France.

The speakers included François Minchin, President of Pathé Marconi, the French branch of EMI, and Chairman of the IFPI Council, Fraser Jamieson, President of IFPI, Lucien Adès, President of the French National Section of IFPI, John Fobes, Deputy Director General of UNESCO, S. K. Jain, Deputy Director General, ILO (International Labour Office), K. L. Liguier-Laubhault, Deputy Director General of WIPO (World Intellectual Property Organization), Edgar Faure, President of the French National Assembly and Stephen M. Stewart, Director General of IFPI.

Young musicians from Hungary and Iran performed between the speeches. From Hungary came the cymbalon player, Marta Fabian, a "laureate" of the IMC's International Rostrum of Young Interpreters, and from Iran, Kyani and Shemirani, Santur and Zarb — one of the forms of the traditional Persian drum.

The ceremony ended with the inauguration of an exhibition, organized at UNESCO house by the IMC and IFPI, showing the contribution of sound recording to the work of UNESCO and the IMC.

Some photos illustrated the use of sound recording in UNESCO educational activities in Asia and Africa. Others, together with record covers, presented the UNESCO collections of records of traditional and folk music, contemporary music and young interpreters.

These were set among old instruments — cylinders, and the earliest record players — and brought home vividly the way we have come since the World Collection of Folk Music was brought out by UNESCO on 78 r.p.m. records over a quarter of a century ago.

No less impressive was the evidence of UNESCO and IMC sponsorship of the first gramophone records of works by such composers as Dallapiccola, Dutilleux, Messiaen, Petrassi and Stockhausen.

The exhibition will again be set up in October 1977, in Bratislava, Czechoslovakia, on the occasion of the next General Assembly and World Music Week.

The IFPI celebrations, which were attended by leaders of the industry from all over the world, included a solemn ceremony of commemoration at Paris University — Sorbonne — and a divertissement-banquet held in the majestic setting of the Palace of Versailles.



The Indian Posts and Telegraphs Department issued a commemoration stamp on July 20, 1977 to mark the centenary of the invention of the phonograph.

### *FIE Foundation Award for Abdul Satar A. Satar Maker of Miraj*

Among the recipients of the FIE Foundation National Awards for 'Outstanding Contribution to Engineering and Humanity' is Abdul Satar A. Satar Maker of Miraj. His family has for five generations practised the art of making stringed musical instruments and as early as 1924 Mahatma Gandhi expressed his appreciation of the role that the family had played in upholding the tradition of classical music. Their firm, Haji Abdulkarim Ismailsaheb, Satarmaker and Sons, Miraj (India), today supplies the bulk of the instruments used at AIR centres and in music institutions and also exports them to countries where our music is honoured. Some of our most eminent artistes have spoken in the warmest terms about the quality of the instruments and the craftsmanship that has gone into their making.

The ancestors of this family were known as *shikalgar-s* or weapon-makers. They were encouraged by the rulers of the State of Miraj to divert their skills to making instruments of peace. Today nearly seventy families

are engaged in manufacturing the instruments sold by the firm. About eight to ten pieces are made every month with an annual turnover of forty thousand rupees. The first proprietor of the firm Haji Abdulkarim Saheb created a seven-foot long sarangi for the Gandharva Mahavidyalaya founded by Pandit Vishnu Digambar Paluskar. One of the prized creations of recent times is a seven-foot long sitar made for a businessman in the U.S.A. The instrument has as many as thirty-five strings and superb engravings.

The experiment (conducted at the instance of the Industries Commission) of organising a six-month course for young apprentices yielded encouraging results and it is hoped that recognition from prestigious organisations, such as FIE, of the contribution of Abdul Satar of Miraj and his family will stimulate further development in this sphere of activity so closely allied to music.

— M. D. HATKANAGALEKAR

## Book Reviews

THE SITAR. THE INSTRUMENT AND ITS TECHNIQUE by Manfred M. Junius, International Institute for Comparative Music Studies and Documentation, Berlin, 1974. (In English).

Manfred M. Junius' *The Sitar—The Instrument and its Technique* once again proves that the instrument and our music have become popular not only in India but also abroad. Even before the publication of this book, there have been books written on our music, especially by foreign authors, but hardly a whole book on the sitar alone.

The book under review is in eleven chapters, one of which is exclusively devoted to the *Jawari* (*Djovari* as it is spelt here) and contributed by Thomas Marcotty. The chapter deserves special mention because of the author's honest effort to bring certain facts to the notice of readers. He has managed to do so bearing non-Indian readers in mind.

There is a great deal, in the Preface and in the Introduction, which can be a matter of controversy and I am positive that Dr. Alain Danielou (who is the Director of the International Institute for Comparative Music Studies and Documentation, Berlin) would agree with me here. But to discuss those problems may not be quite relevant at this point.

The third chapter, which deals with the sitar, lacks scholastic thoroughness. The history of the instrument, the introduction of 'meend' by a particular maestro, the function of the three strings should have been justified by factual data. One fails to understand why the author, in his historical account of the players and the instrument, completely forgot to mention the contribution of the great 'Senia' player Ustad Barqat Ullah Khan Sahab who was not only regarded as a great 'Senia' sitar player but also known for his contribution towards enriching the art of sitar playing. While the author lists the names of many contemporary sitar masters, he has failed to take note of Ustad Mushtaq Ali Khan, a great purist and performer in the traditional style. Why should he have been left out of the list of 'best-known contemporary Sitarists' (page 20)? One can hardly be satisfied by the statement at the end of the introduction: "There are various other traditional schools also, which have their own characteristic beauty, but to mention them all as well as the names of the many distinguished Sitarists would be beyond the purpose of this introduction" (page 21) and assume from it that Ustad Mushtaq Ali Khan figures in 'various other traditional schools'. If Plate 27 (showing the author at the surbahar) has a place in this book, then the names of Ustad Mushtaq Ali Khan (the greatest surbahar player of India), Ustad Imrat Khan, Smt. Annapurna Ravi Shankar should have been mentioned as surbahar players of high rank and tradition. The names of Rameshwar

Pathak, Ustad Yusuf Ali Khan and Wahid Khan Sahab, who have left a definite stamp on the art of sitar playing, ought to have been included in this chapter. Mention should have been made of contemporary players like Pandit Balaram Pathak, Ustad Halim Jafar Khan, Ustad Rais Khan to mention a very few.

The author might perhaps consider the incorporation of certain other facts in future editions. For instance, Chapter Five includes some graded exercises, but a student, who has not had the privilege of associating himself with a Guru, might find it difficult to imbibe much from them. There is a great deal in this book which seems to be a repetition of the work of Harihar Rao on the sitar, of Nazir Jairazbhoy on *raga-s* and the sitar and of Pandit Ravi Shankar's observations in his book *My Life, My Music*.

Chapter Seven contains some explanation of *zamzama*, *murki*. But this should have been elaborated and much more could have been added. In the case of *zamzama*, there are musicians who may not quite agree with the view held by the author. This chapter could be revised and made more comprehensive in the interest of the technical aspect of Indian classical instrumental music.

Chapter Nine has some *sargam-s* of seven *raga-s* including the *raga* Yaman and Yaman Kalyan. Pandit Bhatkhande's ten *mela-s* would serve as a better basis for the *sargam-s*. Any confusion between the *raga* Yaman and Yaman Kalyan can thus be avoided for a reader who would like to learn the basic standard accepted *mela-s*.

The photographs and photographic illustrations present an incorrect picture of our contemporary sitar playing. In Plates 13 and 23, the author indicates what he thinks is the correct placing of the right hand and thumb but in Plate 16 the famous sitar player Pandit Ravi Shankar belies the author's idea of the correct positioning of the thumb. Again in Plate 25 the author shows what he regards to be the correct position of the left hand and its two fingers while 'deflecting the string for a Meend', but Plate 20, with Ustad Vilayat Khan Sahab playing, indicates a position of the two fingers of the left hand which is not identical. There is a definite possibility of the reader being confused about who is entirely correct.

This book attempts to focus the attention of western readers on the technical aspects of the art of sitar playing and the music of India. It does not say anything new and different from whatever has been said earlier, except for the chapter on *Jawari*. It is a pity that the author missed the opportunity of writing a more worthwhile book on a subject which is at present of such tremendous interest. This is a neat publication, but it could have been made into something noteworthy and quite different from other publications already in the market.

— DEBU CHAUDHURI

Satyajit Ray introduces his set of essays by referring to the film-maker's normal reluctance to write about his films. Fortunately, the book proves that Satyajit Ray is not quite so reluctant. And when he writes, he affords us (to quote him loosely), "interesting glimpses of his working methods . . . leading to . . . a partial demystification of the film-making process." This, I think, is a fairly true assessment of the book.

The introduction itself is full of little nuggets of useful experience, particularly for those who are in films. For others it is a window to the world of a film-maker. For instance, in relation to accepting or taking advice while shooting a film, Mr. Ray mentions two lessons he has learnt in film-making: (a) a shot is beautiful only if it is right in its context and this rightness has little to do with what appears to the eye; and (b) never listen to advice on details from someone who does not have the whole film in his head as clearly as you do.

All this may seem to make the book, *Our Films, Their Films*, a kind of primer on how to make films. Actually, it is a series of thoughts, musings, anecdotes and critiques of films. What makes these essays engaging and absorbing is Mr. Ray's disarming candour and his ability to clarify issues related to films in order to be able to function with them in a practical way. Never for a moment is the practitioner of the cinema absent — whether in relation to his own films or to the films of his time, both Indian and foreign. His theories, or rather, equations develop from the resolutions of problems that a film-maker faces when making his films in terms of content, language, syntax and form. In fact, he even deals with the feelings of both the gain and the loss of power that a film-maker experiences in his work. Some critics who have been harsh on the book, suggesting that it lacks depth and profundity, have missed the point of it altogether. Perhaps they expected every pronouncement of Mr. Ray's to be the last word on the subject. His greatness as a film-maker is being measured against these essays. I believe that Mr. Ray, having taught himself how to make films and having had to work out his own criteria — philosophy, aesthetics, etc. — has had to do some fundamental thinking on all the various elements of the cinema in a way that would make the whole thing clear to himself. His film-analysis is simple and craftsmanlike. He takes the structure of a film apart with ease so that it reveals itself to him both as a film-maker as well as part of the audience. There is a fine lucidity here.

In an essay entitled, "What is Wrong with Indian Films?", Mr. Ray arrives at the design and the parameters for his own kind of films. He feels that the American film is a bad model and what the Indian cinema needs ". . . is not more gloss, but more imagination, more integrity and a more intelligent appreciation of the limitations of the medium." (p. 22). Elsewhere he says, "It is incredible that a country which has inspired so much painting, music

and poetry should fail to move the film-maker. He has only to keep his eyes open, and his ears. Let him do so." (p. 24). This rhetorical statement is obviously made by a young man (he was 26 at the time). Today, it sounds a trifle too simple and perhaps a little too impatient with the regular Hindi cinema which like all popular entertainment takes little bits of commercially viable ingredients from everywhere. The origins of Indian film do not suggest a straightforward imitation of Hollywood film. Only the condiments are taken. Be it as it may, the Hindi film of the present day is the new urban folk art.

The essay on film-making, although practical, is a bit restrictive. I do agree with Mr. Ray when he talks of the kind of choice that a film-maker may be faced with, particularly when making his first film. I am not sure that I agree when he says that Indian classical music is difficult to use in film. Ritwik Ghatak has used precisely this form of music as an integral part of several of his films. However, it is true that if incidental music is needed it is more effective with western forms.

In "Odds Against Us", Mr. Ray has outlined several obstacles and restrictions an Indian film-maker faces when choosing subjects. For instance, the impossibility of dealing with political themes. Perhaps now, with the new government and, hopefully, the new censorship policy, it may be possible to make genuinely political films.

When Mr. Ray talks of songs in Indian films, I tend to agree with his observation that film songs are all right as long as they don't go against the grain of the film. Since the average Hindi film has a fairy-tale-like construction, the songs seem to find fairly comfortable positions. There is a contained anarchy in the way a story is narrated and the songs used. It is only when a so-called "realistic" film-maker makes a film and uses songs that they stick out like sore thumbs. I personally believe that the song and dance type of Indian film is a unique contribution and will allow for a lot of innovation and development. I am all for exploring such a form.

In "Four and a Quarter", Mr. Ray analyses four feature-length films by new film-makers. His views on "Duvidha" and "Maya Darpan" are to some extent debatable, but one thing is certain; arbitrariness of form does not automatically make for valid experimentation. In commenting on my film *Ankur*, Mr. Ray admits to a natural aversion to a quadrangular situation. I, myself, find it interesting only because it precludes the built-in dramatic values inherent in a triangular situation.

Mr. Ray's section on "Their Films" is even more candid than the section on "Our Films". This I think is natural because of the greater objectivity that is possible.

There is an excellent review of *Gold Rush* and a fine evaluation of the Italian films of the forties. And a charming nostalgia piece on "Hollywood Then and Now". Mr. Ray is a wonderful raconteur and the best parts of the book are when he recounts the many incidents that took place during the shooting of his films.

All in all, the book is eminently worth reading, in the same tradition as Jean Renoir's "My Life and My Films". It shows a film-maker who loves his work and is unwilling to take the fun out of it by trying to sound profound.

— SHYAM BENEAL

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CHITRA BIKSHAN, RITWIK NUMBER. January-April 1976. Published by Cine Central, 2 Chowringhee Road, Calcutta-13, Rs. 10.00 (*In Bengali and English*).

Almost the complete man between the covers. Obviously after his death, as the rows of alternate positive and negative photo-portraits on the cover frankly suggest. But there's nothing weird about it. The man has come very much alive in his ideas; mostly reprints of the stray articles that Ritwik must have written when he had no film on his hands, or the chats he must obviously have enjoyed during those days of convalescence which had become rather frequent lately and scripts of *Subarnarekha*, *The Question* (a short film of the FII period), the earlier section of *Komal Gandhara* and the latter half of *Jukti Takko o Gappo*.

Incredibly fertile, as a complete list of the films and the scripts he completed (but which were never made into films) and, of course, the ones that somehow had to be abandoned half-way, shows. Controversial? Only insofar as he kept on making significant films even though they flopped in the market. Indomitable? Very much so. In spite of the difficulties without and within. Yes, almost in that order. The irresistible drink swallowed him as a sort of protection when difficulties seemed unsurmountable, the disillusionment hard to bear, the betrayals by the matter-of-fact world tending tediously to repeat themselves. And drink kept him company to the end. But the films were there — though the intervals between them grew longer. Yet nothing interfered with the films, as we have on the authority of Satyajit Ray. Even so the film-maker had the frightening realization that he was not on his own soil.

To continue like this is a disastrous thing in itself. And the disaster did come, aptly after the mostly autobiographical last film. The hero really died on the battlefield.

For the wife, the picture, surely, is not like this. She had had the experience not merely of the film-maker but of the man as well. Cast against the background of the sharply day-to-day world, the portrait emerges to be a very hard print. It looks almost like some character from Kafka down to the last detail.

Pity, Ritwik's ideas do not seem to get collected in a book. Chitra Bikshan has, in the meanwhile, done the signal job of collecting them in a special issue. They surely go a long way to help know the person better than one would through his films.

— ASHOK SHAHANE

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TYAGOPANISHAD by E. N. Purushothaman, Andhra Pradesh Sangeet Nataka Akademi, Hyderabad, 1975, Rs. 20.00 (*In English*).

The songs of Tyagaraja are essentially musical creations but they are worth studying from the literary and aesthetic points of view. Among the composers of Karnatic music it is only Tyagaraja who has invested his musical pieces with a refined literary flavour and it is not surprising that several scholars have succumbed to the temptation of writing commentaries on them. But although such commentaries were available in Telugu, Tamil and other languages, the bare meaning of the *kriti-s* was all that was published in English some time ago by the Ramakrishna Math. The present book by E. N. Purushothaman fulfils a long-felt need for a detailed commentary on Tyagaraja's *kriti-s* for the benefit of the English-reading public.

The book, however, contains commentaries on only 125 *kriti-s*, those which appeared in a serial form in the *Indian Express* from 1971. The author, a former police official, is an ardent devotee of Tyagaraja and has made a thorough study of the *kriti-s* on which he has commented. The texts of the songs have been furnished in the Telugu and Roman scripts and the commentary explains the mood of the songs, the situations in which they were composed, their poetic beauty and the allusions contained in them. The author claims that he referred to fifty books while he was writing his commentary and furnishes profuse quotations from them, although at times the reader wonders whether all the quotations are really relevant to the subject. The author has attempted to explain the rare usage of words by Tyagaraja and to reconcile the different interpretations given by scholars. But simple words like 'Karku Bangaru' (pure gold) used by Tyagaraja in a number of *kriti-s* appear to have eluded him. Nor have his attempts to unravel the meaning of *kriti-s* like 'Manasa Sri' (Isamanohari) met with success.

Unfortunately, the book bristles with spelling and printing mistakes; and also avoidable errors like 'Kalindi Mardanam' (for 'Kaliya Mardanam'). But the book is a labour of love and a measure of his devotion to Tyagaraja.

—S. RAMANATHAN

SWARAGANGECHYA TEERI by G. N. Joshi, Majestic Book Stall, Bombay, 1977, Rs. 20.00 (In Marathi).

"G. N. Joshi" became a household name in middle-class, music-loving Maharashtrian families in the early thirties because of his sweet renderings of *bhavgeet-s* (lyrics) and *gazel-s* and it is difficult to say whether that fantastic new contraption, the gramophone, popularized him or he popularized it. In 1938 he joined the H.M.V. and after more than thirty-two years of service retired as Chief Producer. The music of this era had Joshi as an able witness, participant and propagator. This book is his loosely knit musical autobiography.

The record of his achievements as Producer is impressive. Scouting for undiscovered talent and giving it voice (Leela Limaye: My generation remembers her songs with nostalgia and laments her untimely death); recording popular plays (Atre's *Gharabahr*); recording *jugalbandi-s* of the tabla and mridang (Amir Husen and Alkutkar), of the violin and shehnai (V. N. Jog and Bismillah Khan); recording of different artistes on each side (Ahmed Jan Thirakawa and Amir Husen); recording light and classical, vocal and instrumental music; recording music lessons and children's stories and so on. Behind all this one discerned a restless energy and an innovative mind. G. N. Joshi had obviously to resort to an amazing amount of skill, tact and patience to persuade such a wide variety of artistes to record their music. He also seems to have achieved that rare balancing feat of reconciling aesthetic and commercial considerations.

Word-pictures of most of the Great Ones are to be found here: Bade Gulam Ali Khan, Kesarbai Kerkar, Pandit Omkarnath Thakur, Ravi Shankar, Vilayat Khan, Ali Akbar, Amir Khan, Amir Husen, Akhtari Bai, Kumar Gandharva, Bhimsen Joshi, Bismillah Khan, Bapurao Paluskar, Jagannath-buwa Purohit, Saigal, Naushad, C. Ramchandra and even Yehudi Menuhin. This is a veritable treasure-house of anecdotes and, sometimes, revealing personal insights. A more elaborate analysis of their distinctive styles would have added weight and authority to this volume.

In his last chapter, G. N. Joshi feels compelled to 'reflect' on the contemporary and prospective musical situation. But this kind of approach is hardly natural to his vein of writing. There is little beyond a throwing up of arms in despair—so bleak does the prospect appear to him!

He is content to glorify his own era and the reader, too, would not like to grudge him this satisfaction for he is grateful to G. N. Joshi for two things: his undoubted contribution to the spread of music and the admirably managed narrative of his reminiscences, experiences and experiments.

This reviewer's copy has pp. 130-31, 134-35, 138-39 and 142-43 missing and in their place other pages reappear. An unfortunate lapse in any book, especially this.

—S. H. DESHPANDE

## Record Reviews

"The Industry of Human Happiness"  
*Voices from Everywhere*

This review takes the form of brief notes on a number of albums received from different parts of the world. And in this year, the centenary of the invention of the "Gramophone" by Thomas Edison and Charles Cros, it illustrates the currency of the gramophone wherever music is heard, all types of music—classical, light, popular, folk, vocal, instrumental.

Of the Indian pressings, the most musically satisfying is an album of Ustad Vilayat Khan (sitar) accompanied by Pandit Kishan Maharaj on the tabla. One side is devoted to the *raga* Alhaiya Bilawal; the other to Puriya. The customary *alap* is omitted in both cases, the artist plunging straight into the *gat*. But the contours of the *raga* are beautifully brought out. Vilayat Khan is one of those rare virtuosos who do not allow their virtuosity to dominate their musicianship. The result is that even in the *ati-drut* parts, his plucking is effortlessly clear without any hint of hurrying, the intonation immaculate at all registers, and the rhythm controlled. Kishan Maharaj accompanies with his usual aplomb and the total confidence that comes with both knowledge and experience.

Other discs of music from the North are an L.P. of that popular singer, Lakshmi Shankar, a South Indian musician who has opted for the North and has made the cross-over smoothly and with elegance, an L.P. entitled *Raga Rang*, and an album of *ghazal-s* by Mehdi Hassan. Lakshmi Shankar has devoted a whole side to a *khayal* in Puria-Kalyan which she renders competently. The other side is devoted to a *thumri* in Pilu and two *bhajan-s* to all of which she brings just the right kind of light touch which each of these genres calls for. *Raga Rang* is a pot-pourri of serious and light music of a variety of types. The many great names featured on it are impressive. They include Ravi Shankar, Ali Akbar, Vilayat Khan, Bismillah Khan, and the late Pannalal Ghosh. But the disc is most unsatisfactory, both technically and musically. Several of the pieces sound like re-dubbings from early pressings and no major recording company would or should pass it as technically acceptable. In the centenary year of Edison's phonograph, this would stand out as a poor example of the technical achievement of the Gramophone Company of India. But there it is.

There are two albums of Carnatic music. One is by that brilliant virtuoso of the violin, M. S. Gopalkrishnan. The other is by that popular duo—Radha and Jayalakshmi. The first side of Gopalkrishnan's disc contains the Saranga *varnam* of Tiruvottiyur Thyagaier and the popular *kriti*, *Brova bharama*, in Bahudari by Thyagaraja. The second side is devoted to *alapana* on the *raga* Hamsanatham followed by the Thyagaraja *kriti*, *Bantu areeti*, complete with *swara prasthara*. Gopalkrishnan's technique is phenomenal by any standards. There are, however, passages in the *swara prasthara* where virtuosity is its own reward.

The album of Radha and Jayalakshmi is devoted to nine pieces by Purandaradasa, the *pitamaha* of Carnatic music. Purandaradasa was a prolific genius and is credited with an enormous number of compositions ranging from simple *swaravali*-s, *gita*-s and *ugabhoga*-s to complex and elaborate *suladi*-s. Nine are represented on the present disc. Of the *sahitya* of these pieces, there can be little doubt. But whether this was the way that Purandaradasa sang them or meant them to be sung, it is difficult to say. Radha and Jayalakshmi, however, sing them with much charm and feeling and their rendering does credit to the *sahitya*.

An unusual set of three records which has come our way is the product of the Third Asian Music Rostrum held in Alma-Ata in 1974. The Asian Music Rostrum is an international forum for broadcast music. Any Asian country that is a member of the International Music Council of UNESCO or of the Asian Broadcasting Union can participate in the Rostrum. At Alma-Ata an international "jury" listened to over 200 works submitted by broadcasting organisations from 24 countries and recommended the best of them for dissemination on an international scale through radio and TV, recording and publication. Seventeen of the recommended works representing the classical, folk and "modern" music of eleven Asian regions are available on the present set. It is difficult to pick out the highlights of this and it would be unfair to do so. But a piece to which I can listen again and again and which seems to me a melody of great simplicity and dignity is *Overn Yelan* ("The heat has abated") from Armenia played on two duduks. The duduk is a double-reeded wood wind instrument close to the Indian shehnai. There are offerings from Indonesia, from Iran, a classical Koto duet from Japan. Several Asian Republics of the USSR are represented, an indication of the profusion of their musical cultures. India is represented by a fine rendering of Shankarabharana on the veena by Emani Sankara Sastri and nostalgic memories are aroused in Indian minds by Roshanara Begum's Nata Bhairav, Pakistan's offering. The set of records come with a case and a useful explanatory brochure.

From Japan came two sets, each of three discs, of Folk and Traditional Music of Asia for Children. These are good examples of the Asian co-production programme for UNESCO and have been produced by the Asian Cultural Centre for UNESCO in Tokyo. Altogether 16 countries are represented here—Afghanistan, Bangla Desh, India, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Laos, Malayasia, the Mongolian People's Republic, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Viet-Nam.

The accompanying brochures are models of useful notes and guides, with pleasant illustrations. The texts of the songs, with translations and the melodies in staff notation, are invariably given. These sets should delight teachers, parents and children and even many adults. They represent the concerted efforts and co-operation of the many countries involved and should open many young ears to new and pleasurable musical styles and nuances.

Finally, a disc from Africa: a rare, strange, evocative riot of drums and rhythms and voices. This is the music for *Liandja*, a ballet created by the National Ballet of Zaire. The music takes the form of a succession of dances and folk songs from all the regions of Zaire round a central act. There is something elemental about all this—sacred, ritualistic. The ballet and the music celebrate the birth of a race and of a brave chief Liandja. And as we listen to the music we begin to realise that there are regions of Africa and African culture of which we have been so blissfully ignorant, where the primeval rhythms of mankind have been used to such purpose and urgency that the world of sound envelops man and makes his environment meaningful in a most practical and hypnotic way.

THE STAR STUDDED WORLD OF USTAD VILAYAT KHAN (Sitar). Side One: *Raga Alhaiya Bilawal*, *Gat: Tritaal*. Side Two: *Raga Puriya*, *Gat: Tritaal*. HMV ECSD 2772 (Stereo).

LAKSHMI SHANKAR SINGS KHAYAL, THUMRI AND BHAJAN. Side One: *Raga Puria-Kalyan*. Side Two: (a) *Thumri Pilu*, (b) *Bhajan*-s. HMV ECSD 2782 (Stereo).

RAGA RANG. A tapestry of Indian Classical Instrumental Music. Side One: *Bangla Kirtan*—Pt. Ravi Shankar (sitar), *Bhatiyali Dhun*—Pannalal Ghosh (flute), *Raga Asawari*—Ustad Ali Akbar Khan (sarod), *Thumri Bhairvin*—Ustad Vilayat Khan and Ustad Bismillah Khan (sitar and shehnai). Side Two: *Dhun Pahadi*—Shiv Kumar Sharma, Hari Prasad Chaurasia and Brij Bhushan Kabra (santoor, flute and guitar); *Pakhawaj: Chautaal*—Swami Pagal Das (pakhawaj); *The Rains*—Orchestral Music Based on *Raga Malhar*—Vijaya Raghava Rao and Orchestra; *Veena: Mayamalvagowla*—Chitti Babu (veena). HMV ECSD 2773 (Stereo).

MEHDI HASSAN IN CONCERT VOL II (*Ghazal*-s). Side One: *Mohabbat karne wale kam na honge*, *Baat karni mujhe mushkil*. Side Two: *Bhooli bisri chand ummeden*, *Abke ham bichhre*. HMV ECLP 14606.

M. S. GOPALKRISHNAN (violin). Side One: *Saranga Varnam*—Adi Thalam, Composer: Thiruvottiyur Thyagaier; '*Brova Bharama*'—Bahudari Ragam—Adi Thalam, Composer: Sri Thyagarajaswamy. Side Two: '*Bantu Reeti*'—Hamsanatham Ragam—Adi Thalam, Composer: Sri Thyagarajaswamy. HMV ECSD 3276 (Stereo).

SIRI PURANDARADASA KIRTHANAS—RADHA & JAYALAKSHMI  
HMV ECSD 3281 (Stereo).

III INTERNATIONAL ASIAN MUSIC ROSTRUM—1973. Works Selected by the Jury.  
MELODIA 33C30—07493-6; 33C10—07497-8 (Stereo).

FOLK AND TRADITIONAL MUSIC OF ASIA FOR CHILDREN. Asian Co-  
production Programme for UNESCO. 1 and 2.  
UP 1003— 1 to 3 and UP 1004, 1005 and 1006 (Stereo).

BALLET NATIONAL DE LA REPUBLIQUE DU ZAIRE DANS LIANDJA,  
Département de la Culture et des Arts, République du Zaïre. BNI.

— N. M.

## International Music Day

October 1, 1977

The Fifteenth General Assembly of UNESCO held in Lausanne in 1973 decided that the 1st of October be observed as International Music Day. Since 1975 the International Music Council has organized celebrations on that day when people all over the world have expressed their deepest human feelings and highest hopes through the medium of music. The main thoughts underlying this concept are the promotion of musical art among all sections of society, the application of UNESCO ideals of peace and friendship and of the mutual appreciation of the aesthetic values of different peoples.

Music still offers the possibility of human understanding with the minimum of disagreement at a time when the human family is more than ever rent apart by ancient prejudices. Musical manifestations of every description are encouraged, from concerts and broadcasts of music to spontaneous musicmaking in the streets by singers, choral groups, jazz musicians and exponents of folk and classical music.

This year the General Assembly and the Congress of the International Music Council will meet in Czechoslovakia (Bratislava/Prague) and provide a focus for International Music Day and World Music Week, 1977.

The celebrations in India will include recitals in various parts of the country and broadcasts on AIR. The National Centre for the Performing Arts which functions as the National Committee of the International Music Council plans to hold a concert by

Nagaswaram Vidwan Sheik Chinnamoulana Sahib and Party  
on

Saturday, October 1, 1977

at 7 p.m.

at

Vishweshwarayya Memorial Hall, Bombay.